

Grants Board
28 September 2021

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the GRANTS BOARD held on Tuesday 28 September 2021 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE

PRESENT: Councillors R.Lass (Chairman)
R.Trigg (Vice-Chairman)

L.Brandon, L.Chesterman, J.Lake, S.McNamara,
J.P.Skoczylas, F.Wachuku

OFFICIALS B. Moreira (Community Partnership Manager)
PRESENT: J. Anthony (Principal Governance Officer)
V. Mistry (Democratic Services Assistant)

12. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A.Dennis.

13. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2021 (previously circulated) were approved as a correct record.

14. SMALL COMMUNITY GRANTS 2021/22 – ROUND ONE

Report of the Corporate Director (Housing and Communities) detailing two applications for Small Community Grants 2021/22 – Round One.

£50,000 was available in total during the financial year 2021/22 to be awarded through the grants process.

Herts Phoenix - £2,000

Members received an update on the application as it was previously discussed at the meeting in July and a decision to award a grant remained pending.

The project would improve the trackside hut and stores at Gosling Sports Park as part of a bigger project to improve the track and sporting facilities.

The following points were noted:

- Herts Phoenix do not have a lease with Gosling Sports Park and club would be unable to benefit from improvements funded by the grant should they be unable to continue at Gosling Sport Park.

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- There was an option to ask Herts Phoenix to re-apply for the next round, (due to close in November 2021), once they had put more formal arrangements in place for their tenancy at Gosling Sport Park.
- Officers confirmed that the grant funding would be used for facilities not provided (or expected to be provided) by Gosling.

AGREED a grant of £2,000.

WGC Youth FC - £2,000

The project would develop opportunities for players aged 14 and upwards to become young leaders and support the Foundation Phase coaches and players at training sessions. It would also establish an FA Playmaker cohort each year.

Members noted that this application was outstanding from the first round as it was missed due to an administrative error.

The following point was noted:

- Members were fully supportive of the project which sought to increase outdoor youth activities and team sport participation in the community.

AGREED a grant of £2,000.

RESOLVED:

That Small Grants should be paid as follows (out of a budget £50,000):

Small Grants	Amount Sought (£)	Amount Granted (£)
Herts Phoenix	£2,000	£2,000
WGC Youth FC	£2,000	£2,000
Total	£4,000	£4,000

15. COVID-19 RELIEF GRANTS 2021/22 - ROUND ONE

An opportunity arose to be part of a joint bid to Hertfordshire's Health Protection Board, for money from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) to enhance the Council's Community Grants programme and help support capacity within local charitable and voluntary organisations in connection with Covid-19 infection control and recovery.

The Council was successful in a joint bid considered at the Health Protection Board on 25 May 2021. As a result, the Council had been awarded £100,000 to distribute as grant support to local charitable and voluntary organisations, who meet the criteria of the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) scheme.

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Cabinet agreed that that the grants should be made available through the community grant programme and overseen by the Grants Board.

The money was now available to the Council and will need to be issued by 31 December 2021.

This was the first round of funding for the Covid-19 Relief Community Grants. A second round of funding was now open and will close on 7 November 2021 prior to judgement on 13 December 2021.

In total £50,430 had been applied for in the round of funding for the Covid-19 Relief Community Grant Applications.

Cruse Bereavement Care Hertfordshire - £5,000

The grant would be used to continue to recruit volunteers and train those and existing volunteers in the use of technology to deliver a Covid safe support service.

A grant would enable them to continue to support bereaved people either on a one-to-one basis for 6 sessions with a named volunteer or through an online group with other bereaved people.

The following points were noted:

- Members queried why more funding was not requested but noted that the organisation could apply for further funding in the next round.

AGREED a grant of £5,000.

Druglink - £10,000

The grant would cover costs of materials used in projects for rough sleepers and tablets to provide wider support.

They housed rough sleepers in response to the Government's initiative to get people inside during the pandemic. The organisation provided extra staff and round the clock cover to ensure that residents were sticking to the Government's call to stay in lockdown.

The following points were noted:

- It was noted that Druglink were heavily supported by Hertfordshire County Council.
- It was noted that the tablets could be used for searching for jobs, checking appointments, helping people to have access to the internet and communication support.

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- Members discussed a preference not to fund salaries but recognised that in some cases funding of staff costs was required to ensure services were delivered.

AGREED a grant of £10,000.

Home Start Herts - £5,430

The grant would be used for building resources back up, both financial resource and staff/volunteer resource in order to achieve objectives of providing support for parents at the earliest opportunity, so they can give their children the best start in life.

- 1) Recruit and train a new cohort of volunteer mentors to help clear waiting list that was building and take action before families went into crisis. The training course involves 6 weekly sessions each one is 4 hours, in which extensive training is undertaken to assess their suitability and equip them to support families.
- 2) Fill a shortfall in the funding for the organisation's Welwyn Hatfield family group, and which would enable more families to join the group.

The following points were noted:

- Members noted that the organisation had lost staff and volunteers during Covid.
- Members noted the funds would go towards office costs and recruiting volunteers.
- Members thought it was a worthy cause.

AGREED a grant of £5,430.

Isabel Hospice - £10,000

The grant would help support with core costs this year, helping the organisation to continue to provide care to those in the community that need them.

A grant would be used to support the Hospices core clinical services which include the Living Well with Isabel programme, Clinical Nurse Specialists, Community work, Family and Bereavement support team, and Hospice at Home service.

The following points were noted:

- The Hospice provided different initiatives to help raise money for funds.

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- Isabel Hospice had raised approximately £6 Million per year before the pandemic. However this figure was severely reduced last year partly due to the closure of shops due to lockdown restrictions.
- Members had previously chosen to not fund healthcare work as it was outside of the Borough's responsibilities. However, this grant scheme was different, with its own set of criteria. Members were satisfied that the previous policy towards healthcare applications would remain unchanged even if this grant was awarded.

AGREED a grant of £10,000.

Resolve (Community Café) - £10,000

The grant would be used to put funding towards the running costs of the Cafe in order to mitigate the losses that had been experienced due to the pandemic and associated lockdown and social distancing requirements. The café had closed at the first lockdown and had only reopened on a limited basis. The café had also failed to reach pre-pandemic levels of income as customers remained wary of being inside or even eating out. The café relies on the generosity of those who have means/disposable income, in order to supplement the income so that those in the community who do not have the means can benefit.

The following points were noted:

- Members noted that there are always people at the café and the staff are friendly and happy to help.
- It was noted that zero costs would go towards staffing costs.
- It was noted that losses were high and Members were happy to help the charity grow.

AGREED a grant of £10,000.

WGC Rugby - £10,000

The grant would go towards funding to start and complete Phase 2 of the project which would provide safe changing facilities and an accessible WC in the entrance foyer of the club. The organisation would expect the project to encourage more participants of all ages to take up the game and pursue an active lifestyle.

The changing facilities are self-evidently unfit for purpose. On Sundays, most children/women do not change or shower because of this.

The following points were noted:

- Members noted that the grant was for changing facilities.

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- It was noted that the Rugby club promoted volunteering during the pandemic with staff and coaches were volunteering at the vaccination centre at Shire Park.
- Members assumed the club's ability to generate income during the pandemic would have been severely limited.
- It was assumed that the Covid Grant would be used to replace losses suffered during the pandemic, however this level of detail was not available in the application.
- Members queried how much the club claimed from Hertfordshire County Council.
- Members would like to help the club but wanted clarification on how Covid had impacted them and how the grant would help them.

REJECTED grant of 10,000.

RESOLVED:

That Covid-19 Relief Community Grants should be paid as follows:

COVID-19 Grant Organisations	Amount Seeking (£)	Amount Granted (£)
Cruse Bereavement Care Hertfordshire	£5,000	£5,000
Druglink	£10,000	£10,000
Home Start Herts	£5,430	£5,430
Isabel Hospice	£10,000	£10,000
Resolve (Community Café)	£10,000	£10,000
WGC Rugby	£10,000	£0
Total	£50,430	£40,430

Meeting ended 8.04pm
VM