

Report to: Charity Committee

Date of Meeting: 25th September 2017

Report Title: Foreshore Trust Small Grants Programme 2017-18

Report By: Monica Adams-Acton
Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture

Purpose of Report

1. To present the recommendations of the Grant Advisory Panel (GAP) in respect of applications for Small Grants 2017-18.
 2. To consider changes to the grants budgets and eligibility criteria for the Small Grants Scheme and the Events Grants Scheme.
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Recommendation(s)

That the Charity Committee:

1. Consider for approval the Small Grants recommendations of the GAP as set out in Appendix 1
 2. Consider the benefits of changing the grant levels and eligible area.
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Reasons for Recommendations

The Grant Advisory Panel has appraised the merits of the applications received for Small Grant support and has made a number of recommendations for grant awards that can be funded from the available 2017-18 budget.

Some potential changes to the annual budgets for each scheme and maximum and minimum awards for both schemes, and the eligible area for the Events Grants Scheme have been commented on by some members of the Grants Advisory Panel.

Background

1. The Foreshore Trust Small Grants Programme is a small grants scheme to address the Foreshore Trust's stated charitable priorities and obligations.
2. £50,000 is available for the 2017-18 financial year for small grants of up to £5,000 each.
3. The Charity Committee previously resolved within the 2017-18 Financial Year to review the levels of grant budgets and the eligible area for the Events Grants Scheme.
4. The first part of this report deals with the deliberations of the Grants Advisory Panel (Panel) in respect of the Small Grants Scheme. The second part of this report considers a number of changes that the Charity Committee might want to make to the Grants Schemes.

Small Grants Awards 2017-18

5. The process used to invite and evaluate grant applications was in accordance with the protocols agreed by the Charity Committee in December 2014.
6. The Panel met in July 2017 to discuss the respective merits of each application. Its recommendations are set out in the report from the Panel Chair (Appendix 1).
7. All of the applications for funding were assessed in terms of the organisations' ability to deliver their proposals, how closely the proposed activities match the priorities of the Charity Committee, value for money and a fair distribution of funds amongst all the priorities and members of the community.
8. In total, fourteen projects are recommended for approval with some of these subject to conditions. All of the approved projects are to be delivered between October 2017 and September 2018. The amount recommended totals £49,538.

Potential changes to the Grants Schemes

9. The Panel did not meet to jointly consider potential changes to the grants schemes, but did agree to comment by email on potential changes put forward by Council officers.
10. Just four of the eight Panel members responded to the officers' proposals.
11. The proposals and comments by the four Panel members are set out below.
12. Grant Budgets
 - It was proposed that the annual budget for the Small Grants Scheme be increased from £50,000 to £60,000, and the annual budget for the Events Grants Scheme be increased from £20,000 to £30,000.

- All four Panel members who responded agreed with these proposals.
- It should be noted however that the grants budgets, which are funded from surplus reserves, are set annually by the Charity Committee after considering the likely level of reserves.

13. Minimum and maximum grant levels

- There is currently no minimum grant level established for either Scheme. The maximum grant award per application in any one year under the Small Grants Scheme is £5,000, and £2,000 under the Events Grants Scheme.
- One Panel member (the Chair), recommended that a minimum grant level of £600 be established for both Schemes.
- Both Schemes are generally significantly oversubscribed, and the time taken to administer applications can be considerable. Each application goes through a rigorous assessment process, regardless of the size of the grant requested and awarded.
- Any changes in maximum and minimum levels of grant should take into account their potential impact on the resources available to administer the Schemes.

14. Eligible areas

- Currently, there are no geographic restrictions in connection with the Small Grants Schemes, although applications for activities beyond the borough boundaries are generally not recommended for approval.
- Grants under the Events Grants Scheme are restricted to activities taking place on Foreshore Trust land. Some events that have been funded in the past include activities both on and off Foreshore Trust land, but any grant awarded has always been restricted to those activities that take place on Foreshore Trust land.
- Appendix 2 to this report sets out a potential expansion of the eligible area for the Events Grants Scheme. Some Panel members expressed a concern that charitable support might benefit commercial venues. Another member expressed a concern about Warrior Square being included in the eligible area.

Policy Implications

15. The Foreshore Trust's Grants Schemes support activities that impact positively on the social and economic wellbeing of residents in the Borough, as well as assisting organisations in delivering a range of activities for local people that might otherwise be unavailable. The priorities of the Events Grants Scheme are to provide assistance to projects that increase the number of people participating in healthy and enjoyable activities along the seafront and that celebrate and enhance cultural diversity.

Wards Affected

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	
Risk Management	
Environmental Issues	
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	
Organisational Consequences	
Local People's Views	
Anti-Poverty	

Additional Information

Appendix 1 – Report by the Chair of the Grants Advisory Panel with the Panel's recommendations.

Appendix 2 – Draft Foreshore Trust Eligible Land Events Grants Map

Officer to Contact

Ian Sycamore
isycamore@hastings.gov.uk
01424 451339
