

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Leader and Executive Member for Hampshire 2050 and Corporate Services
Date:	25 September 2023
Title:	Parish and Town Council Investment Fund and Rural Communities Fund - Approval of Larger Grants
Report From:	Director of Hampshire 2050

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Purpose of this Report

1. The report considers four applications for a grant from the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund 2023/24, and one application for a grant from the Rural Communities Fund 2023/24.

Recommendation

2. That the Leader and Executive Member for Hampshire 2050 and Corporate Services:
 - a) approves four grant applications to the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund (PTCIF) totalling £63,880, as set out in Appendix A of the report.
 - b) approves the grant application to the Rural Communities Fund (RCF) from Bramley Village Hall totalling £7940, as set out in Appendix B of the report.

Executive Summary

3. Four organisations have applied for a grant through the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund 2023/24 and the funds requested total £67,380. The report considers the applications and recommends awards totalling £63,880. The recommended award can be met from within existing budget provision.

4. One organisation has applied for a larger grant through the Rural Communities Fund 2023/24 and the funds requested total £7940. The report considers the application and recommends the total award. The recommended award can be met from within existing budget provision.
5. Details of each grant application, for which this paper seeks approval, are given in Appendix A and B.

Contextual Information

6. The Rural Programme supports the County Council's support of rural Hampshire and assisting Parish and Town Councils to respond to local priorities, including management of the PTCIF and RCF grant schemes.
7. The priority of the PTCIF is to support partnerships between Parish and Town Councils or local community groups and the County Council. It provides investments to schemes which respond to local needs and aims to reduce pressure on County Council Services. Full details of the PTCIF, including what the County Council can and cannot fund, can be found [here](#).
8. The Rural Communities Fund offers small grants to support Parish Councils, groups and organisations in rural Hampshire and small market towns. The overall priorities of the scheme are to build community resilience and encourage self-help. Full details of the RCF, including what the County Council can and cannot fund, can be found [here](#).

Finance

9. The recommended awards can be met from within existing budget provision.

Performance

10. The PTCIF grant applications have been reviewed by the relevant HCC Partnering Team and the Rural Programme Team, against the grant scheme criteria detailed via the link in Paragraph 7, and approval is only recommended following receipt of their supporting statements. Detailed assessments for each application are provided in Appendix A.
11. The RCF grant applications have been reviewed by the Rural Programme Team against the grant scheme criteria detailed via the link in Paragraph 8. Detailed assessments for each application are provided in Appendix B.
12. Grant applications received since July 2023 for awards below £5,000 have been approved by the Corporate Director for Hampshire 2050. These are summarised in Appendix C for information.

Consultation and Equalities

13. A high-level Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The grants are intended to have a positive impact and advance equality.
14. The corporate terms and condition of grant require that any organisation in receipt of funding shall ensure that at all times it complies with the Equality Act 2010 if applicable and shall ensure that it does not discriminate against any person or persons on the basis of protected characteristics.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

15. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
16. The carbon mitigation tool decision tree indicates it is not suitable for the assessment of a programme. The decisions in this report are financial decisions in relation to a programme of one-off grant opportunities. Therefore, the tool is not suitable for this Climate Change Impact Assessment and has not been used.

Other Key Issues

17. Legal Implications: Section 1 (1) of the Localism Act gives the County Council the power to do anything that individuals may generally do. This includes the power to make grants.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
EMPR Report - Update on the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund and Associated Rural Issues	25.04.2019
Rural Programme 2023-24 Grant Spending-2023-07-13-LEMH2050 Decision Day	13.07.2023
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
HCC Climate Change Initiatives	13 July 2021

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

No negative impacts are anticipated.

Appendix A – Grant assessments – Parish and Town Council Investment Fund

Organisation (District / Division)	Amount Requested	Amount recommended			
Fawley Parish Council (New Forest / South Waterside)	£18,130	£18,130			
Application summary	<p>Rural Programme Team comments: The QE2 Recreation Ground building, run by Fawley Parish Council, is extensively used by the community as a whole. They have invested in a building energy audit and strategy which has guided them to first reduce demand, then reduce loss and then finally generating renewable energy.</p> <p>This application is the culmination of their energy generation project which looks to install 40 solar PV panels. The quote chosen, whilst one of the more expensive in total, provides a more favourable return on energy production per kW, has a lengthier guarantee period, and a lower carbon production impact, being made in Germany rather than imported from China. Fawley Parish Council have increased their own contribution to match funding to account for the increased quote.</p> <p>The project indicates a financial saving of £1832/yr according to their current fixed price electricity contract. This contract will run out in August 2024, after which an annual financial saving of £3942 is anticipated. This calculates to a favourable repayment period of 6-7 years.</p> <p>Following support from the Climate Change Programme Team, I would recommend this application for funding.</p> <p>Climate Change Programme Team comments: The QE2 recreation ground application to install solar PV supports Hampshire County Council’s climate targets, in particular the target to be carbon neutral by 2050.</p> <p>The carbon saving benefits of the proposal are favourable. The installation of the 40 solar panels would be an annual saving of 2.79 tonnes of CO2. There are also financial benefits to the proposal as the installation of solar PV would save £1,832 annually. Therefore, as the proposal is contributing to the reduction of CO2 released to reach carbon neutrality by 2050, it can be recommended that this proposal is supported.</p>				
Reach	The building benefits approx.15000 residents				
Funding (inc. match)	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£24,167	£18,130		£6,040	£0
(Note: Match funding is not a requirement to this grant but is preferable. Fawley Parish Council have previously self-funded all works to date including their energy review, installation of infra-red heating and upgrade of all lighting to LED. They have committed to 25% match funding)					

Match scheme criteria	Yes
Local Member Comments	Cllr McEvoy is supportive of the award
Recommendation/ conditions	£18,130

Organisation (District / Division)	Amount Requested	Amount recommended
Durley Parish Council (Winchester / Bishops Waltham)	£28,000	£28,000
Application summary	<p>Rural Programme Team comments: Durley Parish Council have provided the results of the Energy Efficiency Audit carried out by Focus Green to demonstrate the benefits for each element of their planned Energy Efficiency project in Durley Memorial Hall.</p> <p>This application seeks funding from the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund in line with HCC's energy efficiency grant funding, to address the building insulation and LED lighting elements of their project, which were shown to be the highest priority measures advised.</p> <p>The existing ceiling is of a construction that cannot accommodate the necessary enhancements and will therefore need to be removed. A new ceiling will then be installed comprising of both the improved technology lighting units and efficient tiles and insulation materials.</p> <p>The proportion of the cost of the new ceiling materials and labour, is £15,500, the new lighting and insulation being the remainder. As both energy saving elements of this project (LED and insulation) involve work to the ceilings, the work plan is to implement both concurrently. This approach will save both time and cost.</p> <p>Following support from the Climate Change Programme Team, I would recommend this application for funding.</p> <p>Climate Change Programme Team comments: Durley Parish Council have demonstrated a commitment to the climate emergency, as declared by Hampshire County Council in 2019, by firstly obtaining an energy audit and then striving to take measures to reduce their energy consumption and carbon footprint. The proposals set out in the application will help to reduce emissions from both gas and electricity. Collectively, the measures are forecast to achieve an annual energy saving of nearly 9,000kWh, resulting in an annual financial saving of £2,000, in addition to a carbon saving of 1.79tCO₂e. On this basis, it can be recommended that this proposal is supported.</p>	

<i>Reach</i>	The building benefits approx. 3000 residents				
<i>Funding (inc. match)</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£33,000	£28,000		£5,000	£0
	(Note: Match funding is not a requirement to this grant but is preferable. Durley Parish Council have previously received £1450 in grant funding to support their energy efficiency audit). A maximum of £30,000 is available to each applicant.				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>	Yes				
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	As local member, Cllr Humby is supportive of the application. Approval authority to be delegated to Cllr Roz Chadd.				
<i>Recommendation/ conditions</i>	£28,000				

Organisation (District / Division)	Amount Requested	Amount recommended
Millennium Memorial Hall Trust (Winchester / Littleton, Downlands)	£10,950	£10,950
<i>Application summary</i>	<p>Rural Programme Team comments:</p> <p>This application seeks funding from the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund in line with HCC's energy efficiency grant funding, to complete their installation of batteries to run alongside their already installed solar panels at the Millennium Memorial hall.</p> <p>This work builds on the hall's ongoing plans to improve the energy efficiency of their building. The new batteries will further improve the building's energy and financial efficiency. They have already self-funded the installation of the solar panels to £9,600 in 2022.</p> <p>HCC has supported Littleton Millennium Memorial Hall on their energy efficiency journey, contributing to their original energy audit (which has defined these further energy efficiency elements), building fabric improvements, culminating this final stage of installing battery storage alongside their solar PV installation.</p> <p>Following supporting comments from the Climate Change Programme Team, I would support this application.</p> <p>Climate Change Programme Team's comments:</p> <p>The Littleton Millennium Memorial Hall project proposal supports Hampshire County Council's climate targets, in particular to be carbon neutral by 2050. A solar battery would help to reduce the carbon usage of the building as it would mean that the energy created by renewable sources to power the heating</p>	

	system at all hours. This would align with Hampshire's decarbonisation plans. If the proposal is implemented, then just under 1 tCO ₂ e per year would be saved. On this basis, it can be recommended that this proposal is supported.				
<i>Reach</i>	The building benefits approx. 4000 residents				
<i>Funding (inc. match)</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£10,950	£10,950		£0	£0
	(Note: Match funding is not a requirement to this grant but is preferable. Match funding is recognised through the self-funded installation of the solar panels in 2022 costing £9,600. Note previous funding awarded: 2022/23 - £4440 from PTCIF for preliminary energy efficiency works, with match funding of £14,000.)				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>	Yes				
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	Cllr Warwick is supportive of the award.				
<i>Recommendation/conditions</i>	£10,950				

Organisation <i>(District / Division)</i>	Amount Requested	Amount recommended
Making Space - Havant <i>(Havant / North East Havant)</i>	£10,300	£6,800
<i>Application summary</i>	<p>Rural Programme Comments:</p> <p>The services provided by Making Space focus on meeting the needs and challenges faced by all Leigh Park residents. They collaborate with agencies and community groups to work with refugees, asylum seekers, the homeless and for those living in refuges, hospice care and assisted living. Participants are referred by Social Prescribers, GP's, Social Workers, Mind and support groups and we provide support for vulnerable people through our services, with the goal of preventing the need for intervention.</p> <p>They lease the building from Hampshire County Council (since 2007), but are wholly responsible for maintenance and improvements.</p> <p>Following a recent award from the Arts Council to run 18 months of creative workshops, they would like to offer this to groups for whom this type of activity has not previously been an option, due to the diversity of these groups who often require a more private space.</p>	

Currently their kitchenette is located in the middle of a practical workspace where 5 staff members and 7 resident artists need access throughout the day. As a result, they have had to turn down requests from groups that require more privacy. This includes a rape crisis charity wanting to utilise the space for art therapy work and an ethnic charity hoping to run a creative course as an engagement tool for women facing financial abuse. It closes off possibilities to expand their work to those with disabilities, as whilst they are fully accessible for people with special educational needs, the interruptions in sessions would be intolerable.

Grant funds to relocate this kitchenette will enable them to run more private and secure sessions, in which they can guarantee participants will not be interrupted, enabling them to reach a much wider and more diverse range of local residents.

They are also seeking funding for an external metal frame pergola to provide shelter for attendees who wish to take a break outside. Since this element is not directly related to their objectives of provision of a safe and private internal space, we would recommend that Making Space seek alternative match funding to cover this improvement whilst the PTCIF can support them with their primary aim, allowing them to accommodate a more diverse group of people.

Following confirmation from Adult's Health and Care, I would recommend this application for funding.

Adult's Services Comments:

Social isolation, community dislocation and poor mental health are all key triggers for people requiring or increasing their requirement for council funded support therefore putting pressure on Adults Health and Care budgets.

As a department Demand Management and Prevention are passionate about ensuring people are able to live happy healthy and independently for as long as possible and empowering the voluntary sector to provide services to meet these aims. There are a number of benefits to Adults Health and Care which can be determined from this project including supporting a voluntary sector organisation to provide a service for users who would otherwise likely require similar support direct from Hampshire County Council and to do so in a way which is more cost effective and led by the community they seek to support.

We believe this application, if funded, will enable Making Space to deliver their services on a more sustainable footing in the long term and enable them to improve the outcomes which they are delivering for participants.

Having privacy when seeking support for a range of mental health and social isolation issues is an important factor in determining whether people attend a service or not, and so this project is vital to ensuring fair access to all those who wish to use the service.

	Adults Health have an ongoing project with Making Space which we believe will be able to deliver for a greater number of people and enhanced outcomes for those who do participate if this project is funded, and therefore we fully support it.'				
<i>Reach</i>	The building benefits approx. 1600 residents				
<i>Funding (inc. match)</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£11,800	£10,300	£0	£500	£1000
	(Note: Match funding is not a requirement to this grant but is preferable. Making Space can provide £500 of match funding to cover any contingencies. They have approached Havant Borough Council but grant funding has been withdrawn. Councillor Branson is contributing £1000 towards the project) Note previous funding awarded: £4656 in 2023/24 from the Waste Prevention Community Grant, and £4950 2022/23 from Adults Services Place Based Grant for craft led support for carers, and £12,000 from LCF 2022/23 for volunteer training.				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>	Yes				
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	Cllr Branson is aware of the award, and has agreed a contribution £1000 towards the project.				
<i>Recommendation/ conditions</i>	£6,800 We would recommend that Making Space seek match funding to fund the external gazebo elements of their project, however no condition would be placed on our portion of funding allowing them to proceed as soon as possible.				

Appendix B – Grant assessments – Rural Communities Fund

Organisation <i>(District / Division)</i>	Amount Requested	Amount recommended			
Bramley Village Hall <i>(Basingstoke & Deane / Calleva)</i>	£7,938	£7,938			
<i>Application summary</i>	<p>This application is to refurbish the current kitchen as it is in need of replacement so as to continue to offer the hall as a functional hiring space for the village community and beyond. The Hall is a hub for many activities and the Main Hall and its kitchen are the most used spaces, serving chiefly as a venue for the daily village preschool. Most of the regular and all of the party hirers use the kitchen and complaints are now being received about the state it is in. It no longer meets the needs of many of the community groups, who may soon feel they need to go elsewhere for better facilities.</p> <p>A new, modern kitchen which works well and complies with all safety standards, will enable the Hall to remain as the 'go to' venue for villagers for most village activities, both commercial and non. Currently the kitchen is used by the bowls club, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows, private parties, the monthly village market, twice monthly Country Music club, Parish Council meetings, WI events, monthly Line Dancing club and the annual village show. All of these groups would benefit from better kitchen facilities but will also help to appeal to other, new groups or larger parties/weddings etc where catering facilities are all important.</p>				
<i>Reach</i>	Will benefit approx.1000 residents				
<i>Funding (inc. match)</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£18,938	£7,938	£11,000	£2,000	£0
	(Note previous funding awarded: 2018/19 Community Buildings Capital Fund - £21,600 towards extension and hall improvements; 2022/23 Parish and Town Council Investment Fund - £4019 towards solar panels)				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>	Yes				
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	Cllr Vaughan is supportive of the award				
<i>Recommendation/ conditions</i>	£7,938				

Appendix C

Summary of Officer Decisions Made 2023/24 for grants under £5000:

Organisation	Project	Grant Approved	Date Approved
Millenium Memorial Hall Trust	PTCIF - LED lighting	£2700	12/07/2023
Portchester Community Centre	PTCIF - LED lighting	£3716	24/07/2023
Cross Barn Odiham	PTCIF - Energy Audit	£900	14/08/2023
New Forest Heritage Café	RCF - Kitchen improvements	£3340	07/08/2023
Houghton Village Hall	PTCIF - Energy Audit	£1043	25/08/2023
Fair Oak Parish Council	PTCIF - Energy Audit	£1495	25/08/2023
Romsey Show	RCF - Country Show	£5000	25/08/2023
Chilworth Parish Council	PTCIF – Solar	£5000	07/09/2023
	Total	£23,194	