

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	19 April 2018
Title:	Rural Delivery Strategy – Rural Communities Fund Grant Application
Report From:	Director for Culture, Communities and Business Services

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1. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Policy and Resources:

- 1.1. Approves the Rural Communities Fund grant application set out in section 5 of the report, for a £10,000 contribution to Twyford Parish Council. This will be to support the appointment of a consulting engineer to design a flood mitigation scheme to prevent future disruption from flooding in the village centre, including the protection of properties and businesses.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to outline an application for funding from the Rural Communities Fund.

3. Contextual information

- 3.1. The revised County Council Rural Delivery priority actions were agreed by Cabinet in March 2014 (report 5684). These include supporting community resilience, rural transport, self-help, communications and economic development.
- 3.2. The funding proposal presented in this report fits within the priority actions and builds on existing initiatives to maximise impact and use of available resources. The proposal has been reviewed by cross-departmental colleagues and Councillor Edward Heron, the Assistant to the Executive - Rural Affairs Champion, who are supportive of the recommendations. It is also fully supported by the local County Councillor, Cllr Rob Humby.
- 3.3. The Rural Communities Fund is a combination of four Hampshire County Council grant schemes previously available to rural communities. It supports projects that help deliver against the Rural Delivery priority actions to build community resilience and encourage self-help. The launch of the scheme

was approved by the Executive Member for Policy and Resources at his Decision Day in June 2017.

4. Finance

- 4.1. The Rural Communities Fund budget for 2018/19 is £100,000, split across four themes (countryside access, flood alleviation, retailers and community enterprises, and general community resilience and self-help initiatives).
- 4.2. Decision making for grant applications up to £5,000 was delegated to the Assistant Director for Culture and Heritage by the Executive Member for Policy and Resources at his decision day on 16 June 2017. One new application for funding over £5,000 has been received for consideration; this is for £10,000 from the Rural Communities Fund – community-led flood alleviation theme (see paragraph 5).
- 4.3. Any decision to support this application will not imply a guaranteed commitment to make further financial contributions to any resulting scheme. Any further application would be subject to normal value for money and assessment criteria.
- 4.4. 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. Applications are accepted to support one of the four themes listed in 4.1. and funding approval is now sought for one application received under the community-led flood alleviation theme. The aim of this theme is to help rural communities deliver effective solutions to flooding in their local areas to benefit both people and property.
- 4.5. **Twyford Parish Council, £10,000 requested (grant reference 14868)**

The village of Twyford is subject to periodic flooding caused by the rise of a winterbourne which has caused significant disruption and damage. This project seeks to design a flood mitigation scheme to prevent future disruption from flooding in the village centre, including the protection of properties and businesses. Flooding in Twyford affects local shops, the Post Office, doctor's surgery and pharmacy, preventing local access to services.

The Parish Council has been working closely with Hampshire County Council and the Environment Agency on this and a report was produced by HCC in July 2017 to assess which of the many locations affected by the 2014 floods may qualify for Government funding. Whilst the report recognised the damage to homes and businesses, the disruption to normal village life and use of the B3335 and the Hazeley Road, it does not unfortunately qualify for large scale Government funding.

The report did identify two potential schemes to mitigate flooding but work is needed to develop this further. HCC Land Drainage has therefore agreed that the Parish Council should now take the lead on this and appoint a consulting engineer to assess the capacity and condition of the existing drainage network, carry out topographical and ecological surveys, carry out utility searches and trial holes to determine the level of risk and likely cost of

utility diversions, advise on the best scheme, and work out the design and costings. HCC has assisted with the production of a brief for a consulting engineer and the Parish Council would now like to take this forward.

Grant funding is sought to assist with the cost of appointing a consulting engineer. Match funding will be provided by the Parish Council (£5,000), affected property owners and potential developers (the Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood plan and is looking to allocate land for housing, part of which may be affected by periodic flooding).

In light of the impact on access to local services and opportunities to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and attract developer contributions to future works, it is recommended the application is awarded £10,000.

Any implementation proposals will be determined by the outcome of this design and feasibility work and will be subject to a completely separate funding process

CORPORATE OR 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>
Rural Delivery Strategy: rural grants	June 2017
Hampshire County Council's Rural Delivery Strategy	March 2014

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	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. 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 under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

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

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

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The proposal is expected to support all members of the community in maintaining access to important services and as such no negative impacts are anticipated.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

More vibrant, active and resilient communities are likely to suffer less crime and anti-social behaviour.

3. Climate Change:

How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption? Supporting rural retailers encourages residents to shop locally thus reducing car use. The grant application supports measures to improve energy efficiency.

How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts? The proposal supports the culture of self-help and community resilience in rural areas. It is aimed at addressing the significant increased impacts of seasonal and periodic flooding in a planned and sustainable manner.