

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs
<b>Date:</b>	19 September 2019
<b>Title:</b>	Parish and Town Council Investment Fund: Basingstoke Shed-in-a-Bus – Application CG00019664
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

**Contact name:** Lisa Wood  
Robert Stead

**Tel:** 01962 832350      **Email:** [lisa.wood@hants.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.wood@hants.gov.uk)  
[Robert.stead@hants.gov.uk](mailto:Robert.stead@hants.gov.uk)

### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund (PTCF) application from Basingstoke Community Shed Group with the reference CG00019664, entitled 'Basingstoke Shed-in-a-Bus'. Detailed information regarding the application as presented to the Rural Programme Board is included in the Summary Assessment Form attached as Appendix 1.

### Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs approves the PTCF award of £18,220 to Basingstoke Men's Shed to support the application as referenced above.

### Executive Summary

3. The PTC Fund aims to support local partnerships and provide pump priming investments to pilot new innovative ways of working. Successful applications will need to demonstrate how they build resilience within a local community and in response to the growing pressure on County Council services.
4. This project will be delivered by Basingstoke Community Shed Group supported by the Adults' Health and Care Demand Management and Prevention Team (DMPT).

5. Basingstoke Community Shed Group have worked hard to re-establish themselves from a traditional Men's Shed to a forward thinking inter-generational and non-targeted Community Group. They seek to address a demonstrable need to support **all** members of their community struggling with issues of loneliness and social isolation to be connected and active.
6. The PTC Fund allows for a 'cluster' of Parishes, via a central 'hub' to apply for joint funding. This application is the first of this type which clearly utilises this approach and aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of smaller communities working together in order to resolve common issues and to achieve a common goal.
7. Basingstoke Community Shed Group has collaborated to act as the Hub for a cluster of five smaller surrounding Parishes to demonstrate the benefit of converting and utilising a mobile Community Shed-in-a-Bus to reach a wider audience covering previously harder to reach rural areas, promote the benefits of inter-generational working, and ensure their target demographic are able to live healthier and independently for longer.
8. Members from each of the five Parish groups involved in the project have pledged to devote a total of 2380 hours' time over the two year pilot project, which together with own funds committed of £6,620, plus £11,700 in-kind contribution, totals a strong £38,312 in match funding contribution, equivalent to 68% of the project cost.
9. The outcomes will inform the viability of additional rollout across other harder to reach places across Hampshire to benefit a larger number of residents. They will also demonstrate the effectiveness of the Basingstoke Shed-in-a-Bus project in Social Prescribing and support the possibility for longer-term funding from the NHS and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

### **Contextual information**

10. The PTCF was established in November 2018 to support working partnerships with Parish and Town Councils, and local Community Groups. The aim of the fund is to provide pump priming investments to pilot new innovative ways of working, building resilience within a local community, and responding to the growing pressure on County Council services. Applications are fully assessed and approved by the partnering HCC Service, in this instance the Adults' Health and Care Demand Management and Prevention Team (DMPT), and against the fund criteria (see Appendix 3).
11. The PTCF allows for applications from a 'cluster' of parishes/town councils, with the main applicant acting as hub. Currently there are several villages and smaller towns surrounding Basingstoke who have expressed an interest in creating a Community Shed but have been unable to do so due to their small size or limited financial resources. This project, co-ordinated by Basingstoke

Community Shed Group, seeks to resolve this issue by converting a double-decker bus into a mobile shed, to attend five agreed locations (one each day of the week), providing a combined solution.

12. The group have partnered with Stagecoach, who have a keen interest in investing in local communities. They view this project as a practical way of meeting these aims whilst bringing significant value to a large number of communities. As such, they have agreed to provide a bus, free of charge, with a full-service history and provide secure garaging when not in use. Their design specifications for the bus conversion have been provisionally approved by their proposed insurer, and are agreed to be within limits for a non-passenger road vehicle.
13. The project has gained strong support from DMPT, and from the Rural and Parish and Town Council Programme Board, as per the statements submitted in the summary form in Appendix 1.
14. The project is well supported by County Councillor John Bennison as Basingstoke's local member, as well as firm support from Maria Miller MP, and Ranil Jayawardena MP, all of whom have provided written support for the project.

## **Finance**

15. The PTCF was established in November 2018 with an availability of £500,000. The fund can offer both Capital and Revenue targeted investments to support to locally led initiatives which meet the criteria of the fund, usually up to £30,000 (see Appendix 3).
16. The total award sought is £18,220 in revenue funding to re-purpose and run a bus as a mobile Community Shed, covering a cluster of up to 5 Parishes in the rural areas around Basingstoke.
17. Match funding has been secured through a contribution of £6,620 from Membership Fees, £11,700 in kind contribution from Stagecoach and the five Parish Councils involved, together with extensive pledged volunteer support with an equivalent financial value of £19,992.
18. Were the organisation to receive the full amount requested, this would leave £448,083 remaining in the PTCF account (pending 2 further applications also seeking approval with a combined value of £47,630, this would leave £400,453)

## **Performance**

19. The pilot project spans a period of two-years, within which are three evaluation deadlines. The programme of work has been clearly set out with measurable targets against planned benchmarks. Ongoing monitoring is planned ensuring regular updates to the Rural Programme Board and Adults' DMPT.
20. Review of the application's Full Business Case and Summary Assessment Form (see Appendix 1) was undertaken by the Rural Programme Manager and supported in principle by the Rural Programme Board and Head of DMPT.

### **Future direction**

21. Both the County Council's DMPT and Health and Care Team recognise and support the value which this innovative approach could deliver for users of services in the vicinity of Basingstoke and its wider catchment. Close monitoring of the programme will be employed to ensure the targets are met.
22. The Adults' Health and Care Department are currently in the design phase of a county-wide 'Connector Project' which seeks to link users of services to local projects, groups and charities who may be able to meet their individual needs and grow these services where required. The Connector Project has identified potential gaps in service provision in this geographic area, for individuals who would benefit from a membership of a Community Shed. This proposal responds to this community led initiative, which has been scoped to meet local needs, and creates an opportunity to implement and measure the benefits of a pilot project to fill such gaps, which also has the potential to be rolled out to other areas.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

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

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u> EMPR Report – Parish and Town Council Investment Fund.	<u>Date</u> 26/09/2018
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>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.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>

## **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:**

The project is expected to support referred members of the community, but also remains available to all members of the community without prejudice, and as such no negative impacts are anticipated.

## Appendix 1.

### Parish and Town Council Investment Fund 2019/20 Funding assessment form

Organisation name:	Basingstoke Community Shed Group
Project title:	Basingstoke Shed-in-a-Bus
Project location:	5 Parishes around Basingstoke
Application reference:	CG00019664
Total project cost:	£56,532
Amount requested:	£18,220
<i>Match funding – cash:</i>	Membership fees £6,620
<i>Match funding - volunteer hours:</i>	(2380 hours volunteer time pledged for the pilot) £19,992
<i>Match funding - in-kind:</i>	(Bus and Free parking/venues) £11,700
Match funding – total value	£38,312
AMOUNT RECOMMENDED:	£18,220

Eligibility checklist	Yes/No
Is the applicant a Parish or Town Council, or a Local Community Group, directly benefitting the local community, with clear management structure within its constitution or suitable governance/terms of reference?	Yes
Does the project/activity deliver against the scheme priorities (to build community resilience and ease pressure on HCC Services)?	Yes
Does the application have support from the local community and Parish/Town Council?	Yes

Project summary
<p>Basingstoke Shed-in-a-Bus have secured a donated bus from Stagecoach to re-purpose into a mobile workspace for touring hard to reach areas in the vicinity of Basingstoke.</p> <p>The benefits of this will be to provide a service which HCC and local health agencies can refer socially isolated and vulnerable residents, in previously recognised hard to reach areas, to using a referral process already agreed with both.</p> <p>Targets have been discussed with the Adults Health Team and will comprise the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 individual members signed up across the 5 sites by month 6 of the project.</li> <li>• 100 completed user health questionnaires, using the established HCC template, which will be used to demonstrate the impact the project is having on the mental wellbeing and connectiveness of members.</li> <li>• 10 Connect to Support Hampshire events to be completed across the 24 months of the project.</li> <li>• 20 referrals from HCC teams to be taken across the 24 months. An additional 25 referrals will be sought from GPs in the areas.</li> </ul>

Currently there are a number of villages and smaller towns in NE Hampshire who have expressed an interest in creating a shed, or who have an established shed group but require dedicated premises, but have been unable to do so due to their small size or limited financial resources. The project will seek to grow organically to visit 5 communities on a weekly basis.

Stagecoach has shown a keen interest in investing in local communities and see this project as a practical way of delivering this, whilst bringing significant value to a large number of communities.

### **HCC – Officer Feedback/Comments (relevant Services)**

**Peter Stokes** - Strategic Development Manager – Demand Management and Prevention

Adults Health and Care have long understood the value of Men's Sheds in being able to tackle social isolation in older male residents, a demographic which is notoriously difficult to reach with other HCC services. The challenge with any project focussing on social isolation is that it is not usually cost or resource efficient to run them in smaller rural communities, many of which see the highest levels of loneliness and isolation and which can be cut off from larger centres. It is exciting that this application seeks an innovative way of reaching out to smaller and rural communities and bringing services to them, breaking down the barriers to participation.

Value to HCC is seen in improving user's health and wellbeing by tackling loneliness and social isolation and allowing HCC to reach users with other health messaging to ensure that they are able to live healthier and independently for longer. The demographics of some of the more isolated areas being visited by the mobile shed are also similar to those seen in the New Forest and we are able to use the learnings from this pilot to review a similar strategy in that area.

The level of commitment to the project and willingness to involve local businesses is entirely in keeping with the Adults Health strategy of 'harnessing business potential' in improving the wellbeing of communities and it is for the above reasons I wholeheartedly support the application.

### **Programme Officer comments and recommendation**

**Sam Jones** - Rural Programme Manager

When first presented I held reservations on the group being able to tackle the challenging task of procuring and maintaining a suitable vehicle. However, the introduction of Stagecoach as a new partner combined with the groups commitment to progress has resulted in a viable approach.

Looking at the value; the proposal allows numerous sites to either establish, or expand their 'shedding' operations, bringing the Men's Shed offering, and the health and well-being benefits it offers, to a wider audience covering some of the much harder to reach and isolated places in North Hampshire.



The programme has been clearly set out with measurable targets against planned benchmarks, with regular monitoring to update the PTC Fund team, and Adults H&C.

The project has firm support from Maria Miller MP, and Ranil Jayawardena MP.

In light of the above, and the efforts made to source a freely donated bus, as well the substantial pledged volunteer time pledged, I would recommend the organisation is awarded the requested £18,220.

**Local Member comments**

Councillor John Bennison has provided full written support for the project.

**Appendix 2.**

**Supporting information received from other organisations involved or impacted in this project/initiative:**

- **Connect to Support Hampshire, HCC**
- **Hook Parish Council**
- **Church Crookham Parish Council**
- **Old Basing Parish Council**
- **Hartley Wintney Parish Council**
- **Tadley Parish Council**

### **Appendix 3.**

#### **Eligibility and criteria of the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund**

To secure investment from the Fund, the local partnership should ensure:

- They include representatives from both the relevant PTC/s or CG and the relevant County Council service
- The scheme will deliver measurable results against the priorities of the Fund
- The scheme has a project or business plan along with any additional documentation deemed necessary by the County Council service involved. For example, safeguarding measures for schemes engaging social isolation, or design standards for rights of way projects. Templates and support will be provided as necessary
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all members in the local partnership
- Clear demonstration that without support from the Fund the scheme would not be able to proceed at all or to the extent outlined in the application
- Applicants with significant funds in place or higher levels of reserves must demonstrate why investment from the Fund is needed
- It is recognised that applicants will have varying levels of resources and reserves, therefore some flexibility will be permitted in terms of the amount of match funding required. Schemes will be assessed upon the value and financial saving the scheme will create to the community and in support of County Council services
- If the scheme is ongoing, how it will remain sustainable after the initial investment has been made
- An effective monitoring and reporting process are in place, including a final review of the benefits of continuing and/or variability of wider roll out of the scheme to more communities