

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Decision Maker: | Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs |
| Date: | 16 January 2020 |
| Title: | Rural Communities Fund – Hockey’s Farm Shop Grant and Confirmation of 2019/20 Funding to Date |
| Report From: | Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services |

Contact name: Lisa Wood
John Tickle

Tel: 01962 832350
01962 846000

Email: Lisa.wood@hants.gov.uk
John.tickle@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to introduce and seek approval for the Rural Communities Fund (RCF) application from Hockey’s Farm Shop with the reference CG00020008. The application is for contributions to support the extension of the Hockey’s Farm Shop in South Gorley.
2. This being the last available Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs Decision Day of the financial year 2019/20, this report also provides an update on the financial position of Rural Communities Fund, including details of smaller applications under £5,000 which have been agreed and are listed in Appendix 2.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs approves the RCF award of £10,000 to Hockey’s Farm Shop to support the application with the reference CG00020008.

Executive Summary

4. This report seeks to outline an application for funding (£10,000) from the Rural Communities Fund (RCF) 2019/20, under the Funds ‘Rural Retailers and Community Enterprises’ theme.

5. Detailed information regarding the application has been reviewed by the RCF Team, and has met all eligibility criteria. The Grant Assessment Form together with summary information and supporting recommendations have been presented in Appendix 1.

Contextual information

6. 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 four themes. Funding approval is sought for one application received under the 'Rural retailers and community enterprises' theme. The aim of this theme is to help businesses or enterprises grow, increase their productivity and ultimately improve the services that are offered to communities in rural areas. Applications are fully assessed against the grant scheme criteria and eligibility criteria presented in Appendix 3.
7. Hockey's Farm shop is sited in South Gorley, a hamlet in the rural Parish of Ellingham Harbridge & Ibsley, approximately 4.5 miles north of Ringwood, with just under 1500 residents.
8. Following a local survey of customers and staff, Hockey's Farm Shop wish to improve their offering by extending the shop, joining the existing premises to the butcher's preparation room next door. This will provide space for a wider choice of local produce for customers in the local community in a more spacious shop. The larger floor space will provide easier access to wheelchair users and buggies. Having the butchery prep area opened up will also allow customers direct access to the butcher's staff who will be able to prepare and give advice on cuts of meat and how to cook, enhancing the overall service. The extension to the shop and associated increased business will also translate to being able to employ one additional full-time member of staff.
9. The proposed Rural Communities Fund contribution (£10,000) will be targeted to the final fit, and internal refit costs for the shop, including flooring, shelving, chillers.
10. Cllr Michael Thierry has commented on the application as noted within the Grant Assessment Form in Appendix 1.

Finance

11. Total project costs are estimated at £53,978. Match funding is to be funded by the business (£25,000) and a bank loan (£18,978), which equates to 81.5% of

the total cost. Their application to the Rural Communities Fund is for the remaining £10,000.

12. The RCF has a total availability of £100,000. This would leave £61,937.23 remaining for 2019/20 if this grant is approved. Please see Appendix 2 for further clarification of expenditure to date for the RCF.

Performance

13. The 3-year Business Plan submitted by Hockey's Farm Shop sets out their performance targets and demonstrates the achievable growth of the shop if they are able to complete the works as outlined in their application.

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> Rural Delivery Strategy – rural delivery funding Hampshire County Council’s Rural Delivery Strategy Rural Communities Fund – Hursley Village Store grant | <u>Date</u> March 2018 March 2014 June 2019 |
| Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives | |
| <u>Title</u> | <u>Date</u> |

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents | |
| <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> |
| 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:

The project is expected to have a high positive impact to all members of the community, and people living in rural areas, and as such no negative impacts are anticipated.

Appendix 1

Rural Communities Fund 2019/20 – retailers & community enterprises

Grant assessment form

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Grant reference no.: | CG00020008 |
| Organisation name: | Hockeys Farm Shop Ltd |
| Project title: | Shop extension 2019 |
| Project location: | South Gorley, New Forest |

| | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total project cost: | £53,978 |
| Amount requested: | £10,000 |
| Match funding: | £43,978 |
| AMOUNT RECOMMENDED: | £10,000 |

| Eligibility checklist | Yes/No |
|---|--------|
| Does the project/activity take place in a rural area/village with a population of less than 5,000 residents? | Yes |
| Does the application demonstrate how the project will grow the business and provide value for money? | Yes |
| Does the application demonstrate how the project will enhance the local community? | Yes |
| Does the application prove the business is not in direct competition with another business in the same village? | Yes |
| Does the application have support from the Parish/Town Council? | Yes |
| Does the organisation demonstrate that without HCC support the project/activity would not be able to proceed at all or to the extent outlined in the application? | Yes |
| Will the project make a financial difference to the business (ref. accounts and financial forecast)? | Yes |
| Have all documents been submitted in line with the criteria (e.g. business plan, parish council support, freeholders' consent and lease, planning and other permissions, quotes, financial accounts)? | Yes |

| Project summary |
|---|
| <p>South Gorley is a hamlet in the rural Parish of Ellingham, Harbridge & Ibsley, in the New Forest, with just under 1500 residents. The private owners of the Hockeys Farm Shop received initial funding from HCC in 2014. Since then the business has grown and proved sustainable, and achieved the objectives set out in that application, and they have also self-funded the inclusion of a café and community meeting space which is well used locally.</p> |

Following a local survey of customers and staff, they now wish to extend the shop by joining the existing premises to the butcher's preparation room next door. This will provide wider choice of local produce for customers in the local community in a more spacious shop. The larger floor space will provide easier access to wheelchair users and buggies. Having the butchery prep area opened up will also allow customers direct access to the butcher's staff who will be able to give advice on cuts of meat and how to cook, enhancing the overall service.

Total project costs are estimated at £53,978, to be funded by the business (£25,000) and a bank loan (£18,978). Their application to the Rural Communities Fund is for the remaining £10,000.

The Profit and Loss accounts and forecast revenue demonstrates a forecast increase in revenue, which will also translate into the addition of 1 more full-time member of staff. The application costs and forecast revenue figures have also been checked by Emily Preston of the Leader Programme and found to be robust.

The proposed Rural Communities Fund contribution will be targeted to the final fit, and internal refit costs for the shop, including flooring, shelving, chillers.

Officer comments and recommendation

Hockeys Farm Shop Ltd have provided a very well thought out application, and realistic business plan, the project demonstrating a clear benefit to the local community, and visitors to the area alike.

They have met all the criteria for an application to the Rural Communities Fund - Rural Retailers theme, and provided all relevant associated supporting documents, including evidence of planning permission, written letters of support by the Parish Council, along with their own substantial financial contribution. Emily Preston of the LEADER programme has also confirmed support for the project.

Hockeys Farm Shop Ltd have demonstrated the value of the shop to the community, its propensity to promote local produce, and support employment and the local economy as a whole. They have also provided extensive match funding for the project, equal to £43,978, or 81.5% of the total project cost.

A full paper will be submitted for the next EMCRA Decision Day on 16th January 2020 to request that the application is supported.

Officer name: Lisa Wood

Date: 30/10/2019

Local member comments

Cllr Michael Thierry has commented on the application and is supportive of a £5,000 grant.

Appendix 2

| Awarded to date: | | | | |
|-------------------|--|---|--------------------|------------|
| Reference | Applicant | Project Description | Amount awarded | Date |
| CG00017279 | Hursley Village Community Store | Improvements and internal refit to village shop and post office | £ 11,378.46 | 13/06/2019 |
| CG00017300 | Prescription Art Test Valley | Social Prescribing Arts project | £ 1,000.00 | 30/07/2019 |
| CG00019472 | Chilbolton PC | West Down Trees - Ash die back | £ 3,000.00 | 30/07/2019 |
| CG00019519 | Twyford PC | Water meadows regeneration | £ 4,598.90 | 20/08/2019 |
| CG00019764 | Romsey Show | Countryside Arena at Romsey Show | £ 2,500.00 | 10/09/2019 |
| CG00019644 | Barton Stacey PC | IT information hub | £ 404.81 | 17/09/2019 |
| CG00016927 | Langrish FP 2 | Installation of kissing gate on footpath 2 | £ 218.00 | 09/04/2019 |
| CG00016364 | Micheldever PC | 5 x information mapboards throughout parish | £ 3,794.50 | 01/10/2019 |
| CG00017239 | Ecchinswell, Sydmonton & Bishops Green | Stiles to Gates Project SW of Brock's Green | £ 1,168.50 | 10/10/2019 |
| CG00020099 | Broughton Community Shop | EPOS, Windows | £ 1,139.50 | 05/12/2019 |
| | | Total awarded to date | £ 29,202.67 | |
| This application: | | | | |
| CG00020008 | Hockey's farm Shop | Shop Extension | £ 10,000.00 | |
| | | Total remaining | £ 60,797.33 | |
| Awards pending: | | | | |
| Reference | Applicant | Project Description | Amount applied for | Date |
| tbc | Goodworth Clatford PC | Riverbank repairs - protecting open access land | £ 4,980.00 | |
| tbc | Herriard PC | Herriard Green permissive path improvements | £ 4,316.00 | |
| CG00020164 | Alton Ramblers | Hedge Trimmer | £ 578.82 | |
| | | Total pending | £ 9,874.82 | |
| | | Total remaining (if awarded) | £ 50,922.51 | |

Appendix 3

Rural Communities Fund - rural retailers and community enterprises scheme guidance

Introduction

The 'rural retailers and community enterprises' theme of the [Rural Communities Fund](#) provides funding for retailers and community enterprises in rural Hampshire.

The priorities of the theme are to:

- Help retailers grow and increase their productivity by enhancing the services they offer and providing new ones.
- Help develop both new and existing community enterprises that have a retailing element and show potential to develop into a profitable business that will impact positively on the local area, community and economy.
- Support the introduction or expansion of local products and locally produced food and drink into rural retailing outlets, in particular through collaboration with Hampshire Fare and other local businesses and producers.

Grant criteria and eligibility

- Applications must include a short three year business plan (template provided in the Supporting Information Form).
- Projects must demonstrate how they will grow their business and provide value for money.
- Projects must show how they will enhance the local community.
- Projects must prove that they are not in direct competition with another business in the same village.
- Projects must be in an area/village with a population of less than 5,000 residents.
- Successful applicants must complete the project and all purchases within 12 months and send all information required to claim the grant.

Funding criteria

We can provide grants of between £1,000 and £10,000. Eligible businesses/enterprises must contribute a minimum of 50% of total eligible costs. Therefore, the total minimum project cost would be £2,000 (achieving a grant of £1,000).

For commercial businesses, the match funding cannot be sourced from any other grant making authority. Successful applicants will receive 50% of the grant upfront and the final 50% when the project is complete.

For community enterprises, the match funding can be sourced from other grants. Successful applicants will receive 100% of the grant upfront, however any unspent funding must be returned when the project is complete.

Who can apply

The scheme is open to any retailing business/enterprise selling any of the following: - food/drink; essential fresh produce; locally sourced food (applicants are encouraged to consider becoming members of Hampshire Fare). Craft industries may be considered if a positive impact on other local food retailing businesses can be demonstrated.

Eligible businesses/enterprises include:

- Retailing businesses or community buildings comprising post offices
- Village shops
- Village markets
- Butchers
- Bakeries
- Farm shops
- Cafes and tea rooms
- Newsagents

- Mobile facilities
- Pubs
- Community owned woodlands (if comprising a retail element such as a café)
- Pop up shops/cafes

What we can fund

- Introducing/increasing the range of locally produced high quality foods
- Improvements to sales area e.g. food counters, shelving, lighting, heating etc.
- Internal modernisation e.g. flooring, internal fit-out, energy saving devices etc.
- External appearance e.g. signage, shop front improvements, window blinds etc.
- Development of parking facilities e.g. creating additional parking or improvements to layout of existing parking
- Development of local delivery services
- Security e.g. CCTV, alarms etc.
- Developing websites and advertising (to support the eligible retail activity)
- Upgrade of equipment to improve business efficiency e.g. improved energy efficiency, stock control (e.g. epos systems)
- Retail advice and guidance, marketing and promotion e.g. we encourage applicants seeking to improve the efficiency of their business to get independent advice and a grant can be used for reports/business plans to help do this in the first instance, as well as to implement the recommendations made (as a second application)
- Projects supporting creative locations for essential services, such as shops within pubs, village halls, churches or parish halls etc.
- Setting up a community enterprise that will develop rural retail services
- Collaborative projects with local producers and other local retailers

What we can't fund

The scheme will not fund:

- Businesses within population areas of more than 5,000 residents. Priority will be given to smaller settlements with limited services.
- Like for like replacement equipment or any general maintenance. We will only fund items that will add new value to the business/enterprise.
- Running costs e.g. staff costs, purchase of stock or perishable items
- Standard computer equipment
- Non-independent commercial organisations (i.e. with more than one outlet)
- Loans