

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Human Resources and Performance  (due to the declaration of interest declared by the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs)
<b>Date:</b>	17 March 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Rural Communities Fund – New Forest Agricultural Show Society
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

**Contact name:** Jo Heath

**Tel:** 07545735629

**Email:** [jo.heath@hants.gov.uk](mailto:jo.heath@hants.gov.uk)

#### **Purpose of this report**

1. To seek approval from the Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Human Resources and Performance to provide a £10,000 grant contribution from the Rural Communities Fund to support the New Forest Agricultural Show Society grant reference CG00021703, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

#### **Recommendations**

2. That the Executive Member for Commercial Strategy, Human Resources and Performance approve £10,000 grant from the Rural Communities Fund to support the New Forest Agriculture Show Society.

#### **Executive Summary**

3. The purpose of this paper is to outline an application for funding from the Rural Communities Fund.
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 four themes. Funding approval is sought for one application received under the 'Other' theme. The aim of this theme is to support local communities and encourage community resilience.

## **Contextual information**

5. The New Forest Agricultural Show Society has a charitable aim to promote and encourage the development and improvement of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, equestrianism and rural crafts in all their branches; generally to encourage and promote improvement in the breeding of stock; to advance education in the above.
6. Following the cancellation of The New Forest & Hampshire County Show for 2021 due to the Covid19 pandemic, funding is requested to support four smaller events throughout the Summer to reconnect visitors with nature, farming and the countryside. Each event will be run on the New Park Showground in accordance with current COVID event guidance. They have budgeted on bringing in 4,000 visitors per event, but this can be scaled up should regulations allow.
7. The application is to partially cover the cost of planning each of the four events as described in Appendix 1. The aims and objectives of the show are aligned with the objectives of the Rural Communities Fund.

## **Finance**

8. £15,000 has been made available within the Rural Communities Fund (for the 2021-22 financial year) to support Country Shows and Events.
9. The New Forest Agricultural Show Society propose to devote £306,500 of their own funds to planning and hosting the events.
10. In recognition of the sizeable match funding, and the importance of such events to the communities of the New Forest and wider area it is recommended that the full amount requested is awarded (£10,000).
11. It is proposed that any grant funding will be paid in two stages, each 50%. The first payment will be made to allow planning to commence, and will be payable regardless of whether the events go ahead as planned. The second payment will be made when one or more of the events are confirmed to take place, as Covid restrictions are eased.

## **Other Key Issues**

### **Future Direction**

12. The success of the events will be measured through post event surveys to assess whether hosting four individual shows has a greater impact than the traditional larger annual New Forest Show.

**CORPORATE OR 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> Rural Delivery Strategy – rural delivery funding Hampshire County Council’s Rural Delivery Strategy	<u>Date</u> March 2018 March 2014
<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>
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 to:

- The need to remove or minimize 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 proposed grant approval should not raise any equality or diversity issues.

## Appendix 1:

**Rural Communities Fund 2021/22 – ‘Other’****Grant assessment form**

<b>Grant reference no.:</b>	CG00021703
<b>Organisation name:</b>	New Forest Agricultural Show Society
<b>Project title:</b>	The New Park Summer Series
<b>Project location:</b>	New Park Showground, Brockenhurst

<b>Total project cost:</b>	£316,500.00
<b>Amount requested:</b>	£10,000.00
<i>Match funding – cash:</i> (Surrounding Parishes)	£306,500.00
<i>Match funding - volunteer hours:</i>	
<i>Match funding - in-kind:</i> (Cllr Perry)	
<b>Match funding – total value</b>	£306,500.00
<b>AMOUNT RECOMMENDED:</b>	£10,000.00

<b>Eligibility checklist</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
Does the project/activity take place in rural Hampshire, a small market town, or directly benefit rural communities?	Yes
Does the project/activity deliver against the general scheme priorities (to build community resilience and encourage self help)?	Yes
Does the application have support from the local community and Parish/Town Council?	Yes
Has the organisation a clear management structure within its constitution or suitable governance/terms of reference?	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
If the organisation has significant funds in place or higher level of reserves have they demonstrated why funding from HCC is needed?	Yes
Have all documents been submitted in line with the criteria (e.g. photos, map, landowner or parish council consent, quotes, specification)?	Yes
Are all policies/insurances in place in line with the criteria and the proposed project/activity (e.g. employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance)?	Yes

<b>Project summary</b>
The New Forest Agricultural Show Society has a charitable aim to promote and encourage the development and improvement of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, equestrianism and rural crafts in all their branches; generally to encourage and promote improvement in the breeding of stock; to advance education in the above.

Following the cancellation of The New Forest & Hampshire County Show for 2021 (yet to be advertised) they are looking to hold four smaller events throughout the Summer to reconnect visitors with nature, farming and the countryside. Each event will be run on the New Park Showground in accordance with current COVID event guidance. They have budgeted on bringing in 4,000 visitors per event, but this can be scaled up should regulations allow.

The events are planned as follows.

#### 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> June - Forest Arts Festival

A celebration of New Forest arts and culture. The event will bring together local sculptors, wood carvers and forest organisations. We will invite local musicians and artists to create a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere. Throughout the event there will be a focus on sustainability and how we can look after our Forest.

#### 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> July – Festival of the Horse

A day for horse lovers to indulge in their passion. Both attractions and education will focus on the equestrian industry. There will be a strong emphasis on horse riding in the New Forest, the use of bridleways and The New Forest Code. We will hold the usual high standard of horse competitions and bring in the popular horse trade stands. With so many horse lovers within the forest we have high expectations for this event.

#### 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> August – Food & Farming Festival

A celebration of food, farming and local crafts. The Show will include the best of local produce, sheep, cattle and working machinery. There will be a focus on educating visitors on how their food comes from the farm to their plate. This event will be a chance for us to display the best of Hampshire food and promote the importance of local farming.

#### 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September – Countryside Weekend

An educational event where visitors learn through activities, displays and attractions. The focus will be reconnecting with nature. The woodland area of the Showground will be an important part of the event with a Forest School activity zone. We will focus the event on young families and (COVID regulations permitting) aim to hold interactive activities where children get hands on with the countryside.

The launch of each event will be determined by Government guidance. As soon as they are confident events will be allowed to go ahead they will launch the Summer Series. It is anticipated that any money granted by Hampshire County Council will be focussed on improving education at each event. Without the funding we will have to reduce the amount spent on learning.

The New Forest Agricultural Show Society sees the main benefits to the local community as:

1. Bringing money into the local area to support the local economy
2. Showcasing the best Hampshire has to offer
3. Educating visitors on the importance of Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry and

Equestrianism

4. Educating visitors on the importance of following the New Forest Code  
They intend to measure the success of these objectives through post event surveys.

**Officer comments and recommendation**

This application is to partially cover the cost of planning each of the four events as described above. The aims and objectives of the show are aligned with the objectives of the Rural Communities Fund.

The extensive match funding is intended to come from ticket sales, livestock entry fees, trade stands and sponsorship, and Catering sales (£306,500). It is proposed that 50% of the grant funding is made available to plan the events, regardless of whether they go ahead, to cover planning costs incurred. The remaining 50% of any grant award will be payable as soon as (and only if) the summer season of events is announced.

The events are due to take place in the centre of rural New Forest District, at New Park in Brockenhurst, but tends to benefit the whole of the County's rural environment and economy.

In view of the community benefit and substantial match funding being proposed for these events, it is recommended that the full amount requested (£10,000) is awarded to allow New Forest Agricultural Show Society to effectively plan the show series for summer 2021, subject to the conditions listed above.

Officer name: Lisa Wood

Date: 27/01/2021

**Decision record – to be approved at EMRH CRA Decision Day 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

Name: Cllr Heron

Date: