

+CABINET

THURSDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 2020

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE
TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL GRANTS PROCESS**

EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

PURPOSE

To review current Tamworth Borough Council grant funding to community, arts, sports, small businesses, not for profit and voluntary organisations

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- **The award of Tamworth Borough Council Arts, Sports, Voluntary and business grants in their current format and criteria are suspended**
- **A single Community grants budget is adopted for application by Community Groups/ individuals across all areas with new criteria aligned to Council priorities**
- **Award of grants at this time is delegated to the Portfolio Holder Environment and Culture/Portfolio Holder Heritage and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Director Housing and Communities**
- **That £6,200 is made immediately available for community grant awards in Quarter 3 and 4 2020/21**
- **Tamworth Business grants be suspended until January 2021 with a grant budget of £15,000 to run until March 31st 2021.**
- **A complete review of the operation of all grants is considered by 31st March 2021 in light of the Covid pandemic**
- **All grants awarded should demonstrate value for money and value to the people of Tamworth and have specific outcomes that can be recorded.**
- **An additional saving of £16,390 for 2020/21 is approved (all grants) above the £16,000 already identified in Quarter 1 2020/21**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Due to the ongoing response work to the Covid-19 pandemic and issue of emergency grant funding, it has not been possible to determine Tamworth Borough Council grant applications under the original criteria.

As a result of the work of the VCSE sector several external grant funding schemes have been available to assist community groups at this time, including the award of the £100,000 National Lottery funding which, through the work of anchor organisations in Tamworth is supporting groups directly affected by the pandemic.

Tamworth Borough Council currently operates 4 individual grant schemes for community organisations and a Small Business Start Up Grant with an annual combined budget maximum of **£53,590** as follows:-

GRANT	Budget Code	Max Budget	Award criteria
<p>Arts Grants</p> <p>Projects which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a community emphasis • Encourage wider interest and opportunities for involvement arts activities. • Offers something distinctive to Tamworth's arts provision and will represent a development of existing practice for the people involved. 	GX0609 34537	<p>£5,000</p> <p>before Q1</p> <p>£5,000</p> <p>saving</p> <p>projected</p>	<p>Maximum £500</p> <p>(more in exceptional circumstance)</p>
<p>Sports Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches/Education • Sports Clubs • Talent Support 	GY0801 34537	£16,390	<p>A maximum rate of 50% and not exceeding £300. Applications will be considered for a minimum course cost of £100.</p> <p>A maximum of £5000.</p> <p>A maximum rate of 50%</p> <p>The following maximum grants will be awarded:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County level - £300 • Regional level - £500 • National level - £1000

Voluntary organisations Small grants Grants which aim to encourage groups to develop in Tamworth and to support the vision and corporate priorities of Tamworth Borough Council.	GS1002 31551	£12,200 Before Q1 £6,000 saving projected	Maximum £500
Start Up Business Grants This financial support addresses the current funding gap faced by start-up businesses and is available for completely new ventures and those which have been trading for less than three years.	GS1002 57025 (until March 2023) (GS0402 34537)	£20,000 Before Q1 £5,000 saving projected	Grants of between £500 and £1,000 for Start-up business grants This will remain as a separate grant funding stream to provide ongoing effective support to help promote new small business start-ups, self-employment and entrepreneurship in Tamworth
TOTAL FUND		£53,590	

All grants are now considered by Cabinet on a quarterly basis following officer recommendation and under criteria which at this time cannot be linked to the effect of Covid-19 and does not fully reflect the corporate priorities of Tamworth Borough Council.

In the last 5 years all grants have been underspent and are now subject to budgetary and process review. Details attached as Appendix 1.

As a result of the pandemic, Quarter 1 savings of £11,000 for 2020/21 have already been identified and removed from the budget lines as follows:

- Arts Grants - £5,000
- Voluntary Grants - £6,000

Start-Up Business Grants

These grants will also be subject to review to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the business community.

As a result of the pandemic, Quarter 1 savings of £5,000 for 2020/21 have already been identified and removed from the budget lines,

Festive Grants

The Council also provide a £3000 Festive grants funding stream which is allocated to Ward members each year - £100 each to promote Christmas activities for vulnerable

people. This fund has been combined with additional funding this year to provide Councillor Community Grants as a response to Covid-19 and is outside the scope of this report.

2020/21 Grant Budgets

As the country moves into a transitional phase in the recovery from the pandemic and to provide a more efficient and seamless approach to Tamworth Council grant funding, it is proposed that the current separate **Arts, Sport and Voluntary** grants (see background information) are removed with immediate effect and **combined under the Partnerships budget** (through internal virement) to provide a more flexible approach to grant funding and to ensure that the overarching criteria reflects the Corporate vision and priorities as follows:-

- **To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities**
 - To assist community recovery and resilience from the Covid-19 pandemic
 - To help tackle the causes of inequality in our communities
 - To help develop and safeguard our environment and open spaces
 - To increase opportunities to participate in arts, heritage and sports activities
 - Increase volunteering and civic pride
 - Help tackle causes and effects of poverty and financial hardship
 - Consider outstanding individuals or groups who by achievement in arts, culture or sports support and promote Tamworth as a place
 - Promotes and develops community cohesion

All grants should continue to demonstrate value for money and value to the people of Tamworth and have specific outcomes that can be recorded.

Grants will be awarded to community, not for profit organisations or for identified not for profit projects, individuals (subject to due consideration) and voluntary groups operating in Tamworth or who operate for the benefit of the communities of Tamworth

Grants will not be given for: -

- Work and projects of a party-political nature
- Travel and subsistence costs
- Guarantee against organisational loss
- Work and projects which are contrary to the Tamworth Borough Council Diversity and Equality policy
- Projects operated on a commercial or for-profit basis.
- Faith groups applying for grants should ensure that the activities they are offering are open to people from all faiths.

- The funding of organisations, projects or events which promote or condone extremist ideology, activities or terrorism.

Maximum grant award levels will be retained and considered by Cabinet as per current process.

The Partnerships Team in conjunction with Support Staffordshire will continue to advise and support community organisations to identify ongoing and suitable funding opportunities.

The current available funding will be £6,200 (Balance of current Voluntary Grants process after Q1 savings) until 31st March 2021 for use by Community groups with application forms being immediately available.

Quarter 3 grants will be awarded by 31st December and Quarter 4 by 31st March 2021.

Delegation

It is proposed that to allow some greater flexibility that with effect from the 27th October the award of all grants will be delegated for award each quarter in conjunction with the Executive Director Housing and Communities as follows:-

- Community grants – Portfolio Holder Environment and Culture
- Business grants (from January 2021) – Portfolio Holder Heritage and Regeneration

The underspend to date from the remaining Sports Grants of £16,390 will be offered as an additional in year saving

It is also proposed that the Tamworth Business grants be suspended until the same time with a grant budget of £15,000 to run until March 31st 2021.

The underspend £5,000 from the Business grants has already been removed as a Q1 saving

2021/2022 Proposals

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is further proposed that combined grant funding budget and process for grant funding is reviewed with options for Councillors to consider by March 2021

Options to be considered as follows:-

- Retain the current grants budgets, new criteria and process recognising the ongoing budget pressures
- Cease to provide grant funding streams
- Reduce the current grant budgets year in year

- Investigate other options to more effectively and efficiently deliver Tamworth grant funding to provide sustainability for the communities of Tamworth

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Suspend all grant activity until April 2021

No change to current grant criteria and process for Quarter 3 and 4 2021

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Proposals provide a more streamline and efficient delivery of Tamworth Borough Council grants within existing staffing resource

Financial implications are outlined within the report.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

Risks will be managed by using clear and transparent criteria for award of grant funding and award subject to evaluation and report to Cabinet at a later date

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has been completed.

All grant awards are made subject to compliance with the Tamworth Borough Council Diversity and Equality Policy

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Sustainability considerations are included within the report proposals

BACKGROUND

Current External Funding Opportunities

At the current time, the Partnerships team will continue to promote other opportunities in Tamworth for groups to apply for COVID-19 related grants:-

Support Staffordshire

<https://www.supportstaffordshire.org.uk/covid-19-support/covid19-funding> including one specific to Tamworth as a result of a successful National Lottery award

Staffordshire County Council COVID-19 Support Fund:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Coronavirus/I-can-help/COVID-19-Support-Fund/COVID-19-support-fund.aspx>

Staffordshire Community Foundation is also offering emergency funding, groups can call on 01785 339546 to check eligibility and the link to the on-line application is below:

<https://staffsfoundation.org.uk/grants/covid-19-emergency-grants/>

Voluntary Organisations

The Grants to Voluntary Organisations Scheme aims to encourage groups to develop in Tamworth and to support the vision and corporate priorities of Tamworth Borough Council.

A maximum award of £500 per application is allowed, although figures exceeding this amount will be considered in exceptional circumstances. In particular, the committee will look favourably upon those proposals which heavily demonstrate one or both of the following priorities.

- To work collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities
Helping the local economy to grow in a way which benefits our residents and businesses, helping to build resilient communities. Helping tackle the causes of inequality to increase opportunities for all residents and businesses.
Helping protect, nurture and celebrate our local heritage, developing and safeguarding our environment and open spaces.
- To facilitate sustainable growth and economic prosperity
Helping tackle causes and effects of poverty and financial hardship, increasing all residents' resilience and access to information, engaging with our residents to promote community involvement and civic pride. Supporting the development of Tamworth now, and in the future

Grants will be prioritised to groups providing services or activities that contribute to Tamworth Borough Council's vision and corporate priorities, as listed above.

- Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they are contributing towards the development of the voluntary sector in Tamworth.
- Applicants should have a bank account with at least two signatories.
- Applicants should be properly constituted or working towards adopting a constitution. (A copy of the constitution or draft will be required)
- Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they are providing a benefit to the community in Tamworth and are non-profit making organisations with charitable aims.
- Projects supporting healthy lifestyles that include healthy eating and physical activity will be welcome.
- Faith groups applying for grants should ensure that the activities they are offering are open to people from all faiths.

- Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they operate an equal opportunities policy and that when working with children, appropriate child protection policies and procedures are in place.

ARTS GRANTS

Consideration will be given to any planned arts activity that complies with the stated **Arts Policy** of the council and represents good value for money for the people of Tamworth.

A maximum award of £500 per application is allowed although figures exceeding this amount will be considered in exceptional circumstances*. In particular, the committee will look favourably upon those proposals that demonstrate one or more of the following qualities:

- a) Community emphasis – the project should substantially involve or have special relevance to the people of Tamworth and should have a social, artistic and/or economic benefit to the borough.
- b) Increased access and participation – the project will encourage wider interest and opportunities for involvement arts activities.
- c) Originality and creativity – the project will offer something distinctive to Tamworth’s arts provision and will represent a development of existing practice for the people involved.

.A grant can be awarded towards the costs of materials, equipment, instruments, productions, training courses or tuition costs.

Grants will not be given for:-

- Work and projects of a party political nature
- Travel and subsistence costs
- Guarantee against loss
- Work and projects which discriminate against ethnicity, race, gender or religion
- Projects operated on a commercial or for profit basis.
- The funding of organisations, projects or events which promote or condone extremist ideology, activities or terrorism.

Application notes and criteria

Tamworth Borough Council Communities, Planning & Partnerships

Applications are encouraged from new applicants. Not more than one application from the same source will be considered in any 12 month period.

Note: Activities or promotions where the Community Arts Officer is acting as the facilitator and advisor to a group but does not form part of the Council's identified programme can qualify for assistance.

The Committee's decision will be final. However, unsuccessful applicants will be able to resubmit for future consideration.

The Committee may defer a decision pending further information and they may set conditions and provisos.

SPORTS GRANTS

Coaches/Education

Purpose of the Grant

To assist in the development of coaches and officials by enabling them to improve their qualifications and experience.

Criteria

To qualify for grant aid, individuals must apply through their club.

As well as the general criteria which apply to all grant applications, organisations applying for coach/official education grants must meet the following criteria:

- The course for which the individual is applying for grant aid must be for a sport/activity recognised by Sport England and/or the Governing Body of the respective sport.
- Each grant application will be considered on its own merits. Grants will normally be awarded to a maximum rate of 50% and not exceeding £300. Applications will be considered for a minimum course cost of £100.
- Applicants/clubs/other sources must be able to contribute at least 50% of the cost of the proposed course.
- Applicants must be actively involved in providing opportunities and supporting the development of their sport within the Borough of Tamworth.

Sports Club Grants

To increase the availability of sporting opportunities by:

- Assisting existing organisations to develop their sports programmes.
- Encouraging the establishment of new sports groups/clubs/sections.
- Encourage Club Mark.

General Criteria

As well as the general criteria which apply to all grant applications, organisations applying for a development grant must meet the following criteria:

Applicant organisations must provide opportunities that will benefit residents of Tamworth and will normally be located within the Borough boundary. Statutory or public funded organisations are not eligible.

Grants will be made towards the costs of developing a new club or a new activity and only made towards the costs of projects that are developmental.

Clubs and organisations will only be eligible to apply once in a financial year.

Applications **MUST** be received before the project starts.

Applicants should seek to obtain a letter of endorsement from their local governing body (where applicable)/local school or partner organisation(s), in respect of their proposed project before the application for aid is submitted.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate clearly how their project contributes toward the development of sport in Tamworth and the benefits it will bring to Tamworth residents.

Where applicable, applicants must provide their most recent audited accounts to include a balance sheet and an income expenditure statement.

High priority to clubs seeking Club Mark Accreditation.

Specific criteria

- Grants will normally be awarded up to a maximum of £5000.
- Whilst there is no requirement for match funding, contributions from applicants or partner organisations will be encouraged.
- Applicants should demonstrate the level of support in kind that they are committing to the project (for example in voluntary coaching hours), and any financial contributions from you/other sources.

TALENT SUPPORT

Purpose of Funding

To recognise individual talented sports performers in Tamworth and encourage them to develop to their full potential.

The Talent Support fund can be used to assist with:

- Essential items of equipment/clothing required to compete and train;
- Cost of travel for training and competitions;
- Cost of facility hire for training;
- Coaching costs (but not a coach's salary);

- Club subscription costs

Criteria

Funding is only available to those individuals who perform in a sport that is recognised and approved by Sport England

Applicant must be a permanent resident within the Borough boundary. In normal circumstances this will have been for a period of at least two years;

Applications to the fund will not normally be accepted from/on behalf of children under 8 years of age (as of the date of application);

Grants will normally be awarded to a **maximum rate of 50%**

The following maximum grants will be awarded:-

- County level - £300
- Regional level - £500
- National level - £1000

Only one grant application will be approved per applicant per financial year;

Applicants must enclose written support from their Coach/Club/Development squad manager indicating the applicant's current performance level and prospects for the next 12 months. This person must also sign section 4 on the form to verify the amount of support being given;

High Priority will be given to individuals who represent their sport at the Regional level and who are not currently receiving financial support from other sources;

Successful applications will be expected to provide agreed levels of acknowledgement and where appropriate display the Tamworth CSN logo at the event or competition.

FESTIVE GRANTS

The Festive Grants scheme aims to relieve social isolation and promote social inclusion at the festive period. The grant can support an event, scheme, special project that brings residents together or supports isolated residents during the Christmas period.

A maximum of £300 will be available to spend in each of the ten wards in the borough.

If a ward is undersubscribed funds may be redistributed to other wards.

Grants are determined by Scheme of Delegation

The Festive Grant will be available to voluntary and community organisations providing activities to relieve social isolation during the festive period. Applicants should be properly constituted and a copy of the constitution will be required. Applicants should have a bank account with at least two signatories.

Faith groups applying for grants should ensure that the activities they are offering are open to people from all faiths.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they operate an equal opportunities policy and that when working with children, or adults at risk of abuse or neglect a safeguarding policy is in place.

Applications to Ward Councillors

Start Up Business Grants

To receive these grants, individuals will be required to meet some basic criteria. This includes attending the Enterprise for Success programme, an European regional Development Fund programme, which provides 12 hours over a 2 day workshop (pre-start) or 6-12 hours (post-start) of one-to-one advice and support. This will be delivered either from the Tamworth Enterprise Centre or virtually through providers contracted providers Blue Orchid. The Enterprise for Success programme ensures individuals and businesses have the right skills they need to run their business and results in the creation of a business plan. The Jan 2021 business grant round is intended to have a specific focus on people who have been made redundant as a direct result of the pandemic and are subsequently starting up a business.

REPORT AUTHOR

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES