



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission 26 November 2020

Wards affected: All Wards

Review of Parish & Community Initiative Fund and Hinckley Community Initiative Fund grants

Report of Director (Environment & Planning)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To present the Scrutiny Commission with a review of the current PCIF and HCIF grant funds.
- 1.2 To update the Scrutiny Commission on the progress of this year's scheme.
- 1.3 To propose to the Scrutiny Commission a number of improvements and changes to the schemes.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Scrutiny Commission endorses the recommendations for the changes to the 2 schemes as detailed in section 3.4.
- 2.2 That the Scrutiny Commission endorses the change in the timetable for scheme as detailed in 3.5.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 Review of the Scheme

The details below represent information collated for the Parish and Community Initiative Fund (PCIF) since 2005; however; the scheme has run for a number of years prior to 2005. The Hinckley Community Initiative Fund (HCIF) was started in 2014 to mirror the PCIF for the wards of Hinckley.

To date, since 2005, the PCIF has awarded £1,425,613 to 387 community projects within the parishes of Hinckley and Bosworth and the HCIF fund has awarded £34,391 to 19 projects in Hinckley since 2014.

PCIF grants are for capital projects only and will cover 50% of the total project cost up to a maximum of £12,000; there is also a threshold of £12,000 allocated per parish. The HCIF has a total budget of £10,000 and can fund a maximum of £10,000 for a project.

The two schemes are assessed and scored using a set of criteria. There are 6 essential criteria that must be met and projects must also show that they meet at least some of the Council's corporate aims and objectives.

The 6 essential criteria of the schemes are as follows:

1. Is the applicant a properly constituted community organisation, charity or Parish Council? Score 1 for yes 0 for no
2. Is it a capital project? Score 1 for yes 0 for no
3. Is the scheme in a Parish within the borough of Hinckley & Bosworth or a ward within Hinckley town? Score 1 for yes 0 for no
4. Is this work required as part of planning permission or a legal agreement? Score 0 for yes 1 for no
5. Is the land owned by the applicant? If not has a Landowner Permission Form been completed? Score 1 for yes 0 for no
6. Are all other necessary permissions in place? (or confirmation that planning permission is being applied for). Score 1 for yes 0 for no

Applicants must achieve a score of 6 in the essential criteria for the project to proceed to full assessment.

There are 6 more categories that are scored against:

1. Type of scheme – scoring is weighted based on the type of scheme. A consultation carried out in 2011 showed that the top priority for funding was for play area improvements and community building projects, medium priority for conservation projects, sports and fitness projects, footpaths and trails and historic features, and low priority for village signs, notice boards, landscaping projects and improvements to places of worship. Top priority schemes score 10 points, medium 5 points and low priority 1 point.
2. Compliance with HBBC corporate objectives – applicants must score 4 or more against the corporate plan objectives

3. Value for money and evidence of need – there are 5 sub categories under this heading:
 - Are there any similar or existing facilities/schemes within the parish?
 - Is the facility/scheme accessible within reasonable hours? **Reasonable hours are considered to be from 9am to dusk.**
 - Is the application linked to a village appraisal, village design statement or Parish plan?
 - Has a consultation been carried out? Do the results show support for the project?
 - Do you consider the scheme offers good value for money? **Value for money is evaluated based on the total project cost against how many people it benefits.**
4. Funding – This sections ensures the applicant has the remaining 50% funding in place to allow the scheme to be completed and that they have received the necessary quotes based on the Council's financial procedure rules.
5. Design, maintenance and equality – This section ensures that the scheme has been designed against the necessary regulations and standards (including consideration of equality) and that the applicant has the resources to maintain the scheme for at least 10 years.
6. Support – This section is to check that the scheme has support from the local Borough Councillor and from the Parish Council (PCIF only).

3.2 Decision Making Process

Borough Council members for the Parish or Hinckley Ward that the application is from should be contacted by the applicant to gain support for their project (as detailed above). If support has not been received after submission of the application, the first assessor should contact the relevant councillor for their support. Borough Councillor and Parish Council support will increase the overall score of the application.

As part of the reporting process a report with details of all of the applications that are recommended for funding and recommend for rejection is taken to the Scrutiny Commission for comment and endorsement before final sign off from SLT.

On receipt of applications the applicant is notified and the scheme is allocated to a first assessor to chase up any outstanding items, once the first assessor is satisfied that all the information required has been received and they have scored the scheme against the criteria, it is passed to a second assessor to score, an average score is then recorded together with a recommendation for funding or a recommendation for rejection if the scheme doesn't meet the criteria.

Once all schemes have been assessed by two independent assessors and the scores recorded, a meeting is arranged with all the assessors together

with the Head of Street Scene Services and the Strategic and Community Planning Officer, to look at each project and agree which should be funded and a final grant award for each, within the total grant fund of £150k.

From this meeting a report is written to go initially go to SLT for support, then to Scrutiny Commission for endorsement and then back to SLT for final sign off.

The reporting path for the HCIF is currently to SLT, then to Hinckley Area Committee and then back to SLT for sign off, because of the relatively few applications for this scheme there is currently no meeting with the Head of Street Scene Services and the Strategic and Community Planning Officer.

Grants are only paid on completion of the project and on receipt of a final invoice. Grants will cover 50% of the final project cost or the agreed grant amount whichever is lowest. On receipt of the final invoice applicants will be contacted in writing to confirm the final grant payment and to instruct them on the requirements in terms of publicising the project and who to invite. The councillor currently responsible for the scheme is Councillor Martin Cartwright, who is also contacted to confirm that the project has been completed and that someone from the organisation will be in touch with regards to organising publicity.

3.3 Update on this year's Projects

33 PCIF schemes and 4 HCIF schemes have been awarded funding this financial year. Since award letters were sent out 1 applicant Cadeby Parish Council has withdrawn their application because they have been unable to secure the necessary match funding for the project.

To date 8 projects have been completed as follows:

- Keep Desford Beautiful – Desford Community Action Group - £233.00
- Replacement chairs - Desford Church - £2,304.00
- Achieving Our Goals- Market Bosworth Sports Club - £789.00
- Cemetery CCTV – Barwell parish Council - £1,412.00
- Heating & Lighting Renovation Sibson Village Hall – Sheepy P.C - £3,696.00
- Refurbishment of Allotment Car Park – Groby Allotment Society - £3,435.00
- Replacement Safety Surface, Barwell Park – Barwell P.C - £4,100.00
- A new verticutter – Market Bosworth Bowls Club - £2,850

The remaining projects are expected to be completed within this financial year.

3.4 Proposed changes for 2020/2021

- That the total project grant and parish amount remains at £12,000 for the Parish areas but the project amount is increased from £10,000 to £12,000 for Hinckley town area, together with a maximum of £12,000 for Hinckley.

- That the PCIF and HCIF are brought together, the scheme is called the Community Initiative Fund and administered jointly. This will mean a total budget of £162k (made up of the existing £150k budget for the PCIF grant and an increased £12k budget for the HCIF grant). This will help to streamline the assessing and reporting process and allow for only one round of applications per year.
- That applications must score 50 or over against the criteria of the scheme in order to be recommended for funding – this will help to ensure that only good quality schemes that offer a good community benefit are funded.
- That Environmental and habitat conservation schemes are weighted as top priority projects (including sustainable and renewable energy initiatives to public buildings) – To help meet the Council’s climate emergency agenda.
- That the application form and assessment sheet are amended to include more emphasis on detailing the number of people who will benefit from a scheme. This will ensure we are allocated a higher score to projects that benefit the most people.
- Develop an option of an online application submission.

3.5 Timetable

It is proposed in future years to alter the current timetable to fit more closely to the financial year as follows:

- First week in September - The scheme will be launched and applications sent out.
- First week in December – Closing date for applications
- December, January and February – Assessing of applications
- Late February – Report to SLT
- March – Report to Scrutiny/Hinckley Area Committee
- April – SLT final decision
- April – Award offer letters sent out to successful applicants.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

4.1 This report will be taken in open session.

5. Financial implications (AW)

5.1 If approved the HCIF budget will no longer be funded from special expenses charge, and will also be increased to £12,000 (from £10,000). This will then fall on the general fund budget of the council. This is in line with the maximum funding available to parishes under the scheme, and will form part of the new Community Initiative Fund.

6. Legal implications (MR)

6.1 None

7. Corporate Plan implications

- 7.1 The Community Initiative Fund supports parishes and community groups to achieve the following aims and objectives of the Corporate Performance Plan:
- Creating a vibrant place to work and live
 - Empowering Communities
 - Providing value for money and pro-active services

8. Consultation

- 8.1 Scrutiny Commission is consulted as part of the decision to agree grant applications, and also with regards to this review and possible amendments.
- 8.2 Parish Councils and other applicants have previously been consulted on this funding scheme.

9. Risk implications

- 9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
The projects rely on third party delivery and there is therefore a risk that some of the projects may not be delivered	Only projects that are likely to be completed in the following 12 months are recommended for funding	Paul Scragg
Certain projects have conditions attached.	Applicants are required to meet condition, before final grant is awarded.	Paul Scragg
Misuse of funds	Funding for projects is only released once scheme is completed and evidence of completion and payment of the works is received.	Paul Scragg
Increasing the score needed to be recommended for funding may result in more projects being recommended for rejection and the total budget not being spent.	Recommending higher scoring schemes ensures funding spent appropriately. Funding of other schemes will be at discretion of senior officers and council members.	Paul Scragg

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 Grants are awarded to rural areas as well as Hinckley Town, parish council support is sought for each application and Hinckley Area committee approval for Hinckley schemes.
- 10.2 Equalities issues are considered as part of the assessment process

11. Climate implications

- 11.1 The recommendations for proposed changes to the scheme include an increase in scoring for environmental projects which have a positive effect on the climate.

12. Corporate implications

- 12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:
- Community safety implications
 - Environmental implications
 - ICT implications
 - Asset management implications
 - Procurement implications
 - Human resources implications
 - Planning implications
 - Data protection implications
 - Voluntary sector

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