

Cheltenham Borough Council
Cabinet – 19 April 2011
Community Pride Scheme 2011

Accountable member	Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan
Accountable officer	Richard Gibson, Policy and Partnerships Manager
Accountable scrutiny committee	Social and Community O+S
Ward(s) affected	All
Key Decision	No
Executive summary	As part of the 2011-12 budget, the Council agreed to set aside £30,000 for the community pride scheme funded from the Local Area Agreement Performance Reward Grant. The budget papers set out the Cabinet's aspiration that the funding be used to enable "big society" initiatives such as promoting volunteering or voluntary initiatives.
Recommendations	Cabinet agree the application guidelines for the 2011 community pride scheme attached as appendix 2.

Financial implications	In the 2011-12 budget, the Council agreed to set aside £30,000 to support the community pride grant scheme. This is to be funded from the Local Area Agreement Performance Reward Grant, which we have had notification of and is partly due to be received in April 2011. Contact officer: Andrew Sherbourne Principal Accounting Technician E-mail: andrew.sherbourne@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel no: 01242 264337
Legal implications	<i>The payment of these mostly small grants does not generally require much in the way of formal documentation. However, written agreements will be used to document these grants, based on the Community Giving Grant template, with necessary adaptations for the very small grants.</i> Contact officer: Nicolas Wheatley, Solicitor, One Legal E-mail: nicolas.wheatley@tewkesbury.gov.uk Tel no: 01684 272695
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	None identified

Key risks	If division does not put proper controls in place for the management of small grants funds, then we run the risk of funds being used inappropriately or even fraudulently. This risk sits on the Policy and Performance divisional risk register – see Appendix 1 .
Corporate and community plan Implications	The proposed application guidelines will enable the council to support projects that will deliver on the following outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheltenham has a clean and well maintained environment • Cheltenham’s natural and built environment is enhanced and protected • Our residents enjoy a strong sense of community.
Environmental and climate change implications	The proposed application guidelines will enable the council to support projects that will promote sustainability and build up community ownership over the local environment.

1. Background

- 1.1** 2011 will be the fifth year of the council’s community pride scheme which has allocated just over £200,000 to match-fund over 80 community-based projects that have improved and enhanced the public realm. The full list of projects that have been supported is included in **Appendix 3**.
- 1.2** The focus of the scheme has remained resolutely on the public environment but more recent rounds have seen an added emphasis on promoting sustainability and on building-up community ownership over the environment.
- 1.3** For 2011, we are proposing a shift in emphasis to reflect the council’s aspirations that communities are more influential in shaping and delivering public services. As funding for all public services continues to fall, we need tap into opportunities for communities to be involved in delivering services that might have traditionally been provided by the public sector (NHS, police, county council, borough council, job centres etc.). This direction of travel is being shaped by the coalition government’s localism bill, which when enacted, will enshrine new rights for communities such as:
- The community right to challenge – which will give a right for voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, parish councils and local authority employees already delivering a service, to challenge a local authority by expressing an interest in running any service.
 - The community right to buy – which will give communities the chance to develop a bid and raise the capital to buy public assets when they come onto the open market.
 - Local referenda – which will give communities the power to instigate a local referendum on any local issue.

1.4 The focus for 2011 therefore will be to build up community resilience and enable local groups to be more influential in. This might include funding to support:

- The identification, recruitment and support for volunteers;
- Participation in training courses for volunteers and paid staff to develop specific skills such as fund-raising, management structures, governance and accountability;
- The purchase of equipment to enable the group to be more effective in improving their neighbourhood;
- Access to specific advice and support to enable community groups to take on public assets and/or public services, including looking at new organisational models;
- The use of technology and social media to create a sense of community;
- The organisation of community events that will build community resilience; and
- Implementing environmental improvements that will promote sustainability and build up community ownership over the local environment.

2. Consultation and feedback

2.1 The proposed application guidelines were discussed at a meeting of the VCS Forum on 4th April. The forum suggested that the requirement for match funding/contributions in-kind be dropped for applicants requesting smaller amounts of funding (below £500). The forum felt that this would help smaller groups who might not have the ability to fund-raise to secure match funding to deliver their projects.

3. Next Steps

3.1 Once cabinet have agreed the application guidelines, the 2011 scheme will go live on the council's website from Thursday 21st April. We will alert all VCS organisations in the borough through Gloucestershire Association for Voluntary and Community Action. We will also send out a media release to ensure that local groups are aware of the opportunity to submit applications.

3.2 The suggested closing date is Friday 1st June which gives applicants 10 weeks to submit their applications. An assessment panel will meet shortly after to ensure that a list of projects recommended for approval is brought to cabinet on 26th July for approval.

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Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk Assessment 2. Application Guidelines 3. Community Pride summary of projects supported (2007 to 2010)
Background information	

Risk Assessment

Appendix 1

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	I	L	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	If division does not put proper controls in place for the management of the partnership small grants funds, then we run the risk of funds being used inappropriately or even fraudulently	Policy and Partnerships Manager	Apr 2010	3	3	9	reduce	Implement and monitor small grants protocols	ongoing	Policy and Partnerships Manager	Implementation of grant protocols has reduced the likelihood to 2.