

COMMUNITIES CAPITAL FUND – ENDORSEMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS (SEPTEMBER 2020)

To: Communities and Partnership Committee

Meeting Date: 3 September 2020

From: Adrian Chapman, Service Director - Communities and Partnerships

Electoral division(s): All, with particular relevance to the following:

- Alconbury and Kimbolton
- Burwell
- Godmanchester and Huntingdon South
- Sawston and Shelford
- Wisbech West

Forward Plan ref: N/A **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To consider the recommendations of the Member Panel to fund grant applications made under the Communities Capital Fund.

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:

Approve the following applications for funding:

- (i) Great Shelford Parish Council - £109,000 for a playscape project;
- (ii) Fenland District Council - £240,000 for the Wisbech park pavilion;
- (iii) Kimbolton Parish Council - £23,591 for a new humpbacked crossing;
- (iv) Godmanchester Town Council - £190,000 for the community plant nursery;
- (v) Godmanchester Sports Football Association Trust - £220,000 for improvements to the club house and access road; and
- (vi) Burwell Parish Council - £131,125 for refurbishment of the Gardiner Memorial Hall.

Officer contact:		Member contacts:	
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Cambridgeshire Communities Capital Fund was launched on 1st April 2020, and sets aside up to £5m to help support community projects across the county. The fund is also to support community led projects to improve health, wellbeing, social and economic opportunities in our communities.
- 1.2 The fund may contribute up to £0.5m capital funding for community-based projects which can address issues which a specific priority for the local community, address inequality of access to services or activities, and implement community involvement in delivery or design of the project.
- 1.3 At its meeting of 12 March 2020, the Committee agreed the following eligibility criteria:
 - i. Funding will be awarded for eligible capital spend only, and must demonstrate how the purpose of the Fund, will be met
 - ii. Bids must be able to demonstrate additionality, including, for example, how communities will be improved or enhanced by capital investment in their community
 - iii. Bids will be encouraged for projects which fill gaps or where there is an under-representation in council presence or access to public services or other activities within communities, where there is an evidenced need, or known or emerging demand for service. For example, we want to ensure that our rural communities have the same opportunities to engage with services or activities as all other communities
 - iv. No bids will be successful without some level of match funding. Capital funding from the Fund should be awarded only where all other sources of funding have been exhausted, or where council funding would provide match funding alongside other sources of funding. Match funding may be intended rather than secured at application stage, and may include non-cash match funding (e.g. in-kind contributions, land transfer etc.)
 - v. Funding will not be awarded for repairs and maintenance on assets that haven't been subject previously to a regular repairs and maintenance regime. Even then, not all repairs and maintenance would be eligible to be funded through capital budgets, and so proposals that include this would need to be considered on their own merits
 - vi. Proposals for capital projects with a potential impact on carbon emissions will need to demonstrate how these will be minimised
 - vii. Funding will be awarded using the most appropriate financial model – for example, this may be in the form of a non-repayable grant, a loan to be repaid at agreed terms, or an equity-type investment in an organisation with a recurring return on that investment. All funding arrangements would need to comply with existing County Council policies, including for example the existing third party loans policy, which has specific requirements around security, interest rate, setup fees, and guarantees
 - viii. Funding will be awarded only where there is a guarantee of no revenue implications for the County Council (aside from debt charges as a result of borrowing), except where an evidenced case can be made demonstrating how, in turn, an increased short-term revenue cost will lead to more substantial savings later

- ix. State Aid considerations will form part of the overall application and review process.
- x. Applications will need to be endorsed by, and submitted via, either the local County Councillor, or the County Council's Community Champion for the area.

2. MAIN ISSUES

2.1 During July and August, two member panels were convened to consider projects. The Panels considered how the projects met the funding criterion and recommended that the following are approved for funding:

2.2 **Great Shelford Parish Council - £109,000.** Great Shelford's recreation ground has poor play provision for children and young people and shares the space with many stakeholders. Local surveys showed that residents view the current equipment as dated and in poor repair, with toddlers, teenagers and people with additional needs not being catered for. As a result, volunteers created a new charity to develop a masterplan for the area. Working with the local community and parish council, various elements of this masterplan have already been delivered.

Currently, the area suffers from vandalism and anti-social behaviour, and local young people do not feel any sense of ownership or connection to the place. Great Shelford Playscape has taken particular care to ensure that the voices of young people were heard. Young people explained that they wanted somewhere safe to socialise, that they felt excluded from the playground and that the old skate ramp was very difficult to ride. The project will therefore meet their needs of local residents and those from surrounding villages. Match funding of £78,000 from the charity will contribute towards the project costs.

2.3 **Fenland District Council - £240,000.** Wisbech Park is a popular venue within the town and is well used by the community for a range of organised events and individual social and leisure activities. Within the park, there is a disused former changing rooms, which this project will renovate, expand and reopen for community use. The new pavilion will provide a hub for community activities, including arts, a pop up café, a meeting place, changing rooms for sports and managed toilet provision, including a fully accessible toilet – something that the park does not currently include. Match funding of £20,000 is provided by the Town and District councils.

2.4 **Kimbolton Parish Council £23,591.** The project is to construct a safe pedestrian crossing on the B645 Thrapston Road to enable pedestrian traffic to safely cross the B645 which is a busy road connecting St Neots to Higham Ferrars. A humped pedestrian crossing will enable pedestrians to safely cross the road, either on foot, in a wheelchair or on a motorised scooter, which in turn will enable safer access by school children to the local primary school, Mandeville Hall and Scout Hut. Elderly residents currently face difficulties visiting the doctor's surgery, supermarket, along with the bus stops for services to Huntingdon and other local towns. Match funding of £24,000 is available from the Parish and District Councils.

2.5 **Godmanchester Town Council - £190,000.** The plant nursery in Godmanchester transferred from the District Council to the Town Council in April 2020. This is a popular community asset within the town, holding social events and providing many

volunteering opportunities for people to come together and deliver positive outcomes for mental and physical health. The Town Council is keen to invest into the site to provide improved facilities, including improving gas and solar electricity to greenhouses and poly tunnels. The project will also improve access to the site, particularly for disabled users, but also provide increased capacity for bikes and buggies. The Town Council will also look to develop a mobile classroom on site to improve space for community meetings. Match funding of £100,000 is available to support the project.

- 2.6 **Godmanchester Sports Football Association Trust - £220,000.** The football club is located at the edge of the town and close to a large, new housing development. The town is set to expand by an estimated 2,000 residents over the coming years through the new development, and will have no access to social or community facilities within this part of the town. The football club is already a popular venue, hosting 16 sports teams and supporting a wide range of community groups, who use the club house to hold social engagements and community events.

The project will expand the existing club house to be able to host more community bookings, and will improve the narrow access road (a former farm entrance) to improve safety and allow for access for larger vehicles to access the site. Investment into the access road, will also enable the Trust to bid for a 3G pitch (valued at £600k) from the Football Association, who specified the access upgrade as a condition to be addressed.

- 2.7 **Burwell Parish Council - £131,125.** The interior of the well-used Gardiner Memorial Hall in the village has remained largely unchanged since the 1960's. This project will bring the facility up to modern standards in order to further widen its appeal and usage within this growing village in order to continue to meet demand, whilst ensuring that it benefits from all aspects of modern technology. The improvements will achieve the environmental standards set by the parish council and reduce its carbon footprint, reduce running costs, and ensure that it remains robust and fit for purpose for the next 50 years.

The project will not only achieve redesigned access to improve usage by those who are physically challenged, but also widen its appeal to all local users by creating additional facilities and space, whilst reorganising others in order to maximise safety, usability, environmental or other identified issues.

2.8 **Summary of Community Capital Funding**

Since the fund launched in April 2020, 63 applications have been received requesting £9,753,587. Including projects within this report, 35 projects have been approved or recommended for approval, totalling £5m from a £5m budget, there are therefore no further projects that will be approved.

Each project was scored by a cross party member panel, based upon a recommendation from officers and criterion as agreed in the March 2020 Committee meeting (**Appendix 1**). A project must score at least 60 points out of 100 in order to be recommended to Committee for approval.

2.9 Projects funded are as follows:

- Sawtry Skate Park - £18,000
- Somersham Parish Council, outdoor play equipment - £32,561
- Over Parish Council, enhancements to Overcote - £25,597
- Estover Park - £35,000
- Tower Hall, Friday Bridge - £36,000
- Woodhurst Village Hall upgrade - £12,954
- Winwick Village Hall upgrade - £20,000
- Stilton Parish Council play equipment - £37,500
- Caresco, Sawtry Mancave - £41,500
- Swaffham Prior Village Hall refurbishment - £62,000
- Cambourne Town Council youth hub – £237,000
- Ramsey Neighbourhood Trust community hub - £350,000
- March Rugby Club club house -£234,000
- Viva (Soham Mill) renovation- £498,317
- Gorefield Parish Council pavilion extension - £198,000
- Stretham Parish Council new community hub - £500,000
- Fenstanton Village Hall Trust new community hub - £500,000
- Hilton Village Hall improvement audio/visual equipment– up to £10,000
- Eversden Parish Council play equipment - £20,000
- Wisbech Town Council – up to £150,000 for Market Place Enhancements
- Hauxton Parish Council extension to the community hub - £88,855
- Brampton Parish Council Men’s Shed- £50,000
- Stapleford and Shelford Youth Initiative - £12,000
- Christchurch Community Centre - £15,000
- Littleport Parish Council community hub – up to £406,000
- St Mary’s Church, Bartlow stable block conversion - £81,000
- Melbourn Parish Council community hub extension- £65,000
- Girton Parish Council pavilion extension- £275,000
- Fenland District Council – up to £75,000 for improvements to West End Park

2.10 Overall, the Communities Capital Fund has been highly successful and has provided vital investment into many community projects across the county. There has been a wide range of approved projects covering areas such as:

- Improved outdoor play equipment
- Men’s’ Sheds
- Upgrades and extensions to village halls
- New build community hubs where multiple services and activities will take place
- Improvements to parks and recreation grounds
- Investment into arts facilities
- Improvements to sporting hubs
- Improved youth facilities
- Redesigned market place

2.11 However, not all projects can be funded and 28 applications were rejected. Whilst the reasons varied from project to project, there were a number of common themes:

- Sporting projects – many applications were from organisations looking for significant investment into the sports club, due to the building and facilities becoming dated. These tended to be single sports club which offered little in the way of wider community engagement or impact, outside of their main sporting offer
- Lack of match funding – some projects had no match funding in place, or had yet to apply for other external grants
- Limited community impact – many projects failed to demonstrate the community need for a project, or what impact it would have locally
- Occasional use projects – some applications were for projects that would only have occasional use at certain times of the year, for example splash parks
- Projects which were still in the early stages of development – some projects were at the beginning of their planning and had yet to be fully developed. This meant that the detail hadn't been worked through, there was limited or no community consultation and that it would be quite some time before the project could be realised

2.12 Governance and monitoring arrangements

As set out in the Committee report of 6 August, successful applicants are subject to the terms and conditions within the County Council grant agreements. Once projects are approved, officers will monitor the ongoing delivery of projects, providing support and assistance where required, ensuring that the project is able to be linked effectively to wider placed based activity within the community.

A key part of the monitoring process is ensuring that applicants deliver the outcomes stated within their project plan. Funding to applicants will therefore be at set milestones and subject to satisfactory progress being made, before any further payments will be made.

2.13 Change of funding award – March Bears.

Finally, in July 2020 the Committee approved a grant of £234,000 to the March Bears Rugby Club. Since this time, the March Sports Association (a partnership formed of the rugby club, plus other sports clubs using the site) have taken ownership of the project to redevelop the club house. March Sports Association are a community interest company, who hold the lease to the site and have been successful in an application to Sport England for match funding. The grant from the Communities Capital Fund will therefore be paid to March Sports Association instead of March Bears – all other project details remain unchanged.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

The Fund seeks to improve the health, wellbeing, social and economic opportunities and outcomes in our communities, thereby helping to create or enhance a good quality of life for everyone.

3.2 **Thriving places for people to live**

Investment into community projects will provide or enhance capital assets or facilities within our communities, helping to create increased opportunities and therefore thriving places for people to live.

3.3 **The best start for Cambridgeshire's Children**

Several of these projects will provide investment into activities for young people, improving physical and mental wellbeing, reducing isolation and promoting social inclusion.

3.4 **Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050**

Investment into community projects will help to improve local services and activities for residents, reducing the need to travel to towns/villages across Cambridgeshire.

4. **SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Resource Implications**

The capital investment set out in this report was approved at Full Council in February 2020.

4.2 **Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications**

There are no significant implications for this category. However, any commercial opportunities will follow the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and contractual regulations as per existing policies.

4.3 **Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications**

Successful funding awards will be subject to the applicant accepting CCC grant agreement terms and conditions.

4.4 **Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are no significant implications for this category.

4.5 **Engagement and Communications Implications**

There are no significant implications for this category.

4.6 **Localism and Local Member Involvement**

Members have been closely involved in both the development of expressions of interest and in making recommendations

4.7 **Public Health Implications**

The Community Capital Fund will provide an opportunity for communities to secure funding that, combined with their own assets, will enable them to develop interventions that will improve the health and wellbeing of their community members. There is also the opportunity for the communities to, as part of the process, further strengthen their skills and assets.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Emma Jones
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Gus de Silva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Amanda Rose
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Val Thomas