

REPORT TO: EXECUTIVE

**Date of Meeting: Executive – 10 April 2018
Council – 24 April 2018**

Report of: Programme Manager - Communities

**Title: Neighbourhood portion of Community Infra-Structure Levy/ Grants
Roots Grants recommendations March 2018**

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.2 This report recommends awards to be made to six community organisations in this fourth round of the Neighbourhood Community Infra-Structure Levy (CIL) /Grass Roots Grants funding.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Council approves the recommendation made by the Grass Roots Grants Panel which met on the 8 March 2018, to support the following applications:

(For more information about these projects see section 8 of this report below)

	Agency	Project	Cost
1	Countess Wear Village Hall	Activities for children and families	£1,200
2	Alphington Community Association Recommendation to agree in principle subject to further funding being achieved.	Refurbishment of the Shed Theatre at Alphington Village Hall	£50,000
3	Exeter Division Girl Guiding	Refurbishment of Trefoil Lodge	£20,000
4	Exeter Community Initiatives	Exwick Tots	£2,040
5	Parklife Heavitree Recommendation to agree in principle subject to further funding being achieved.	Café and Community Facility	£50,000
6	St Sidwell's Centre	Community compost, commerce and history project	£33,618
	Total		£156,858

3. Reasons for the recommendations:

- 3.1 At the People Scrutiny Committee held on 2 June 2016, and Council on 26 July 2016 it was agreed that the Council would welcome recommendations from the Exeter Community Forum (ECF) Grass Roots Grants Panel as to how to spend the Neighbourhood portion of the Community Infra-Structure Levy (CIL) (£3.75 million over 10 years.) This is the fourth round in this process.

4. What are the resource implications including non- financial resources:

- 4.1 It is estimated that the neighbourhood portion of the total CIL receipts over the next 10 years will be approximately £3.75 million. Executive approved the ring fencing of these funds for implementing the Exeter Community Strategy at its 10 February 2015 meeting. The CIL regulations do not provide for borrowing to be undertaken against CIL receipts, and so sufficient CIL receipts must have accumulated before projects can be funded. There will be administrative and accounting costs in relation to decision-making processes and the implementation of projects funded by the neighbourhood portion of the CIL.
- 4.2 At 15% of total CIL receipts, the neighbourhood portion of CIL receipts, currently equates to approximately **£677,259 (March 18)**. (This figure is accurate after £310,000 for Community Builder funding is deducted).

5. Section 151 Officer Comments:

- 5.1 The Section 151 Officer notes the proposals and will work with the City Development Manager and the Programme Manager – Communities to ensure that the spend of the Neighbourhood portion of the CIL is appropriately administered and accounted for, bearing in mind the decision-making procedures put in place and the Council's ultimate retention of accountability.
- 5.2 Members should be aware that supporting some applications, particularly buildings, may cause the organisations involved further financial challenges maintaining and running the buildings in the future and members should be satisfied that appropriate business plans are in place and that there is no expectation of future financial support from the Council towards the running costs of the building in question.

6. What are the legal aspects?

- 6.1
- (a) The Council is prohibited from borrowing against future CIL receipts to forward fund infrastructure delivery. Hence, CIL receipts cannot be spent until they have accumulated sufficiently to fund projects. This will affect decisions on spending the neighbourhood portion of the CIL, as it does CIL spend decisions generally.
- (b) The CIL regulations do not require the Council to set aside a proportion of CIL receipts for spend in neighbourhoods, given that there are no formal parishes in Exeter, but the Council's Executive resolved to set aside 15% of CIL receipts for this purpose on 10 February 2015.
- (c) The CIL regulations specify that CIL charging authorities must spend CIL receipts on 'the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure', but where passed to local areas, CIL receipts can be used to fund 'anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area'.

7. Monitoring Officer Comments

The allocation of grants to third parties must be determined on the basis of an open and transparent application, review and monitoring process.

The process of awarding Exeter City Council funds to third parties must be considered in the context of the law on state aid and public procurement to ensure that the award of each grant is legally compliant.

Each award must be subject to an agreement between the Council and the third party which sets out the legal basis for the award and the purpose of the grant.

8. Report Details:

- 8.1 **Grass Roots Grants** - This is the fourth round of the Neighbourhood CIL/Grass Roots Grants and focuses on community buildings and supporting community action. This includes the setting up or running a project that runs over a period of time or towards buildings or equipment. Groups were advised that they would be able to apply for up to £50,000 to support building costs, or alternatively groups could apply for funding to support community action.

See Appendix 1. For guidance for applicants and eligibility criteria

Nine applications were received in the latest round, the panel met on the 8 March to assess the applications against the evaluation criteria, the panel recommended supporting six of the applications at this stage. Three of the applicants will be advised to do some further consultation with the wider community to ensure there is local need and/or support for the project, or to revise the project in consultation with the council officer leading on this work.

	Applications supported by panel	Project/Initiative	Funding from Grass Roots Grants	Total cost of project
1.	Countess Wear Village Hall	Activities for children and families – Including a weekly parent & toddlers group and 3 activity sessions and 2 performance events august 2018-March 2019. Meets criteria : area of new development and great unmet local need Conditions of grant – greater connections to be made with Newcourt Community Association and families in area.	£1,200	£2,050 Match funding from ticket sales.
2.	Alphington Community Association	Refurbishment of the Shed Theatre at Alphington Village Hall. Meets criteria – extensive consultation with local community and major plans for 500 new houses in Alphington and 1,500 on border of village. The Theatre will provide a venue for youth	£50,000	£170,000

		activities/drama/music. The panel recommend that this is agreed in principle subject to other funds being raised to allow the refurbishment to go ahead.		
3.	Exeter Division Girl Guiding	Refurbishment of Trefoil Lodge Buddle lane. This will help provide a facility for the girl - guiding movement, but also the local community. They will be able to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting rooms • Community/conference facilities • Fully equipped kitchen • Residential opportunities for youth organisations. The rest of the finance for this project is already in place either through grants or loans.	Capital - £20,000	£292,000
4.	Exeter Community Initiatives	Exwick Tots The project offers support to parents to help prevent social isolation and loneliness. The group provides peer to peer support and friendship and supports children to socialize and learn with other children. This project is led by a group of local parents and supported by the Community Builder for Exwick. The WestExe Children's Centre closed in 2017 leaving little support for local parents/carers.	£2,040	£7,942.00 Match funding through volunteer hours and a grant from West Exeter Lions
5.	Parklife Heavitree	Café and Community Facility To provide a not-for-profit community café and hireable space in Heavitree Pleasure Ground. The building will provide a hub for community work and health and wellbeing activities in the area. Recommendation to agree in principle subject to other funding being received.	£50,000	£650,000 (£46,300 secured to date, plus £60,512 gifts in kind.)
	St Sidwell's Centre	Community compost, commerce and history project, to develop the sidwell Street Association – bring residents, traders and groups together to strengthen their voice and to help tackle the challenges faced by Sidwell Street. Also to collaborate on a specific projects including a food waste recycling/composting initiative and a Sidwell Street history project.	£33,618 (£12,289 Capital £21,329 revenue)	£37,018
Total recommended				£156,858

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan

9.1 Adoption of the Exeter Community Strategy and allocation of Neighbourhood CIL funding helps us to achieve the Corporate Plan objective of Supporting Exeter's Communities – *“Communities in Exeter know best what facilities are needed in their areas and where investment should be prioritised. We recognise that community and voluntary groups have an important role to play in helping us to shape and deliver services in new ways. We will continue to provide support to the community and voluntary sector to achieve a range of positive outcomes for our communities through co-design and co-delivery”.*

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

10.1 All of the projects will be monitored in terms of the agreed outputs and outcomes that have been scrutinised by the Grass Roots Grants panel as part of the application process. Successful applicants will need to provide a monitoring report on their project and will have a peer visit to check the process and outputs/outcomes of the work.

11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

1.1 Supporting the capacity of community organisations to take initiatives, including through identifying priorities for the use of CIL, has the potential to support a wide range of groups across the city and thereby address issues such as equality and diversity, health and wellbeing.

12. Are there any other options?

12.1 No.

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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