

2. Community Grants Audit Report Executive Summary

Audit Objective The overall objective of this audit was to review the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal controls and procedures undertaken by the Council for the awarding of Community Grants by checking compliance with the Exeter Grants Programme - Grants Panel Terms of Reference

Assurance Opinion		Number of actions	
Satisfactory	Whilst there is basically a sound system of internal control there are weaknesses which put some of the objectives at risk or there is evidence that the level of non-compliance with some of the controls may put some of the objectives at risk.	Priority	Number
		High	0
		Medium	5
		Low/Advisory	7
		Total	12

Audit Approach and Scope
 The scope of this audit was to review the Community Grants paid during 2022/23 to ensure that they have been approved in accordance with the Grants Panel Terms of Reference. A check of the entries on the respective community grant financial codes was also undertaken to ensure they agree to the grants issued.

Key controls tested	Assessment	Actions Raised
Terms of Reference		The number of Councillors and Community Representatives on the Panel Group do not agree with the Terms of Reference Grants awarded that do not comply with the Terms of Reference Evaluations forms are not returned by successful applicants
Budget Management		Instances where the grant paid out exceeds the amount requested Unidentified credits on the respective community grant financial codes

Summary and next steps
 The processing of Community grant applications, their review and subsequent approval or refusal is undertaken in an accurate manner. The expected controls are in place.

It was agreed at the previous Community Grant audit (Covid Grants) that the current Firmstep application process, which was used for processing Covid Grant applications, be expanded upon to undertake some of the labour intensive tasks that the Communities Team have to undertake - unfortunately this did not materialise. However, in April 2023 a meeting was held by the Service Lead - Active & Healthy Living and the Communities Team with the Customer Transformation Team with the view that work on this improvement be undertaken as soon as possible.

Subsequent progress has been made as their processes have now been mapped by the Digital Team. Once the digitalisation of the community grant process has been implemented, it will further strengthen the control environment.

This is a final report of the audit findings and incorporates the remedial action agreed with the Programme Manager – Communities and the Communities Officer.