

# Community Chest grants 2023 to 2024

<b>Report number:</b>	<b>CAB/WS/23/009</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	7 February 2023
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**Decisions Plan:** The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan; however, the core grant for the Theatre Royal as referred to in the Plan will now be considered directly through the budget setting process for 2023 to 2024 and is therefore not included within this report.

**Wards impacted:** All wards

**Recommendations:**

**A. Recommendations of the Grant Working Party: Community Chest**

**It is recommended that:**

- 1. the allocation of Community Chest funding for 2023 to 2024, be approved, namely:**

<b>a. Reach Community Projects, Haverhill</b>	<b>£13,000</b>
<b>b. West Suffolk Citizens Advice, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£245,379</b>
<b>c. Catch 22, Suffolk Positive Futures, Mildenhall and Newmarket</b>	<b>£4,800</b>
<b>d. Haverhill Community Trust, Haverhill</b>	<b>£11,620</b>
<b>e. Mildenhall and Newmarket Sea Cadets</b>	<b>£6,000</b>
<b>f. The Racing Centre, Newmarket</b>	<b>£5,400</b>
<b>g. Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds</b>	<b>£5,993</b>
<b>h. Vogue Athletics, Newmarket</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>i. Bridge Community Church, Bury St Edmunds</b>	<b>£7,000</b>
<b>j. Cambridge Pringle Group, Haverhill</b>	<b>£7,800</b>
<b>k. St Mary’s Church, Haverhill</b>	<b>£6,925</b>
<b>l. Suffolk Accident and Rescue Service (SARS), West Suffolk</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>m. West Suffolk Hive CIC, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£3,982</b>
<b>n. Hundon Village Hall and Playing Fields Charity</b>	<b>£2,480</b>
<b>o. Bury Women’s Aid, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£4,200</b>
<b>p. Cruse Bereavement, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£4,882</b>
<b>q. The Befriending Scheme, Haverhill</b>	<b>£5,000</b>
<b>r. Families Together, Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill</b>	<b>£5,908</b>
<b>s. Sharing Parenting – SEN Worker, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£5,142</b>
<b>t. St Nicholas Hospice Trust, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£20,000</b>

<b>u. Suffolk Family Carers, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>v. Art Branches CIC, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£9,524</b>
<b>w. Second Chance Stroke Association, Bury St Edmunds</b>	<b>£3,840</b>
<b>x. BME Suffolk Support Group (BSSG) CIC, Mildenhall</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>y. Bury Drop In, Bury St Edmunds</b>	<b>£9,460</b>
<b>z. Gatehouse Caring, Bury St Edmunds</b>	<b>£12,934</b>
<b>aa. Lightwave CIO, Red Lodge and Beck Row</b>	<b>£8,200</b>
<b>bb. Our Special Friends, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£5,000</b>
<b>cc. The Voluntary Network, West Suffolk (Befriending Service)</b>	<b>£31,700</b>
<b>dd. The Voluntary Network, West Suffolk (Community Transport)</b>	<b>£52,810</b>
<b>ee. Wood Monkey CIC, West Suffolk</b>	<b>£20,000</b>
<b>ff. The Gunners Football Club, West Row</b>	<b>£5,550</b>

**2. For the reasons set out in paragraph 3.5.2 of Report number: CAB/WS/23/009, no Community Chest funding for 2023 to 2024 be awarded to:**

- a. Abbeycroft Leisure – Explore Outdoor, West Suffolk**
- b. Abbeycroft Leisure – Move More Outdoors, West Suffolk**
- c. CRE8 Theatre Productions CIC,**
- d. The Bumblebee Children’s Charity**
- e. Communities Together East Anglia, West Suffolk**
- f. River of Life Community Church, Haverhill**
- g. Homestart Suffolk, West Suffolk**
- h. Ormiston Families, West Suffolk**
- i. Restitute CIC, West Suffolk**
- j. Sharing Parenting – Community Outreach, Newmarket**

- k. Still Good Food CIO, Bury St Edmunds**
- l. Suffolk Mind, West Suffolk**
- m. Anglia Care Trust, West Suffolk**
- n. Bury St Edmunds Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society**
- o. Brandon Festival**
- p. SOS Bus CIO, Newmarket**
- q. Honington and Sapiston Village Hall**
- r. Newmarket Town Council**
- s. Risby Village Hall**
- t. Young Lives Vs Cancer, West Suffolk**

## 1. Context to this report

### A. Recommendations of the Grant Working Party: Community Chest

- 1.1 Community Chest funding supports voluntary and community groups, who contribute towards improving the quality of life for residents across West Suffolk.
- 1.2 The Cabinet-appointed Grant Working Party met on three occasions in December 2022 and January 2023 where it thoroughly considered a number of applications submitted for Community Chest funding in the 2023 to 2024 financial year.

## 2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 Community Chest has £513,406 available for allocation for 2023 to 2024. The budget for 2023 to 2024 was increased by 10 percent, subject to the funding targeting organisations supporting vulnerable individuals/families with cost-of-living challenges.
- 2.2 Overall, the Grant Working Party supported ten applications to the value of £315,303 to assist with cost-of-living challenges. Projects ranged from supporting mobile foodbanks, providing debt and counsellor services, delivering support for vulnerable individuals/families through arts workshops and opening a community café for elderly residents. Projects applying with a direct aim to support Cost of Living outcomes are noted in section three below.
- 2.3 As a one off, an additional allocation of £44,123 has been received from central government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and this has been allocated to eligible projects as required by the criteria for these funds.
- 2.4 Community Chest applications closed on 28 October 2022 and the Council received 52 applications from a wide variety of organisations, totalling **£1,137,335**. In a change to previous years' criteria, and as previously approved by Cabinet, each application was for one year's funding only.
- 2.5 Each application had been summarised within the appropriate category listed in Appendix one attached to this report, with the full applications attached as appendices to the Grant Working Party report. Each application was required to be evaluated in accordance with the eligibility and selection criteria provided to the Grant Working Party. Overall, seven applications to the value of £58,669 did not meet the threshold, however on this occasion all applications were considered in turn.

### **3. Consideration of grants and recommendations: summary**

#### **3.1 Full amount recommended**

The Working Party considered the following applications fully met the eligibility and selection criteria and felt that each project could be satisfactorily delivered. Members supported the allocation of the full amount for each project in 2023 to 2024, as applied for:

1.	Haverhill Community Trust, Haverhill	£11,620
2.	Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds (Cost of Living project)	£5,993
3.	St Mary's Church, Haverhill (Cost of Living project)	£6,925
4.	Suffolk Accident and Rescue Service (SARS), West Suffolk	£10,000
5.	St Nicholas Hospice Trust, West Suffolk	£20,000
6.	Art Branches CIC, West Suffolk	£9,524
7.	Bury Drop In, Bury St Edmunds (Cost of Living project)	£9,460
8.	Wood Monkey CIC, West Suffolk	£20,000

#### **3.2 Part amount recommended**

3.2.1 The Working Party considered the following applications met the eligibility and selection criteria and supported an allocation of funding; however, it felt the amount applied for could not be granted in full in 2023 to 2024. This was largely due to the limited funds available and maintaining a fair and equitable approach to all, basing their rationale on the quality of the application and the amount of funding requested. Members also considered that the proposed reduction would not impact on the organisation's ability to deliver the project, having also acknowledged that many could be signposted to alternative sources of funding to potentially bridge the shortfall should it be required.

The majority of the proposed allocations were derived from examining the breakdown of costs of the project contained in the application and proposing that funding be granted to cover that specific element.

9.	Reach Community Projects, Haverhill (Cost of Living project)	£13,000
10.	Catch 22, Suffolk Positive Futures, Mildenhall and Newmarket	£4,800
11.	Mildenhall and Newmarket Sea Cadets, Mildenhall	£6,000
12.	The Racing Centre, Newmarket	£5,400
13.	Vogue Athletics, Newmarket	£10,000

14. Bridge Community Church, Bury St Edmunds (Cost of Living project)	£7,000
15. Cambridge Pringle Group, Haverhill	£7,800
16. West Suffolk Hive CIC	£3,982
17. Hundon Village Hall and Playing Fields Charity (Cost of Living project)	£2,480
18. Bury St Edmunds Women’s Aid, West Suffolk	£4,200
19. Cruse Bereavement, West Suffolk	£4,882
20. Befriending Scheme, Haverhill	£5,000
21. Families Together, Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill	£5,908
22. Sharing Parenting – SEN worker, West Suffolk	£5,142
23. Suffolk Family Carers, West Suffolk	£10,000
24. Second Chance Stroke Association, Bury St Edmunds	£3,840
25. BME Suffolk Support Group (BSSG) CIC, Mildenhall (Cost of Living project)	£3,000
26. Gatehouse Caring, Bury St Edmunds (Cost of Living project)	£12,934
27. Lightwave CIO, Red Lodge and Beck Row (Cost of Living project)	£8,200
28. Our Special Friends, West Suffolk	£5,000
29. The Voluntary Network, West Suffolk – Befriending Service	£31,700
30. The Voluntary Network, West Suffolk – Community Transport	£52,810
31. The Gunners Football Club, West Row	£5,550

Whilst generally falling within this category, a specific discussion was held on Citizens Advice West Suffolk, as detailed in paragraph 3.3 below.

### 3.3 **Citizens Advice West Suffolk – across West Suffolk**

3.3.1 The Working Party acknowledged the value of Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS) to the community, Council and other services in West Suffolk, recognising the importance of the work they do to support residents in need and the delivery of their preventative services. Due to the level of expertise and our longstanding positive relationship, the Working Party was keen for the Council to support CAWS as best it could within the limited parameters of the Community Chest scheme and budget.

3.3.2 In making its recommendation, the Working Party sought further clarification and information on a number of issues, to which the officers provided comprehensive responses.

- 3.3.3 Whilst minded to support the application with a significant level of grant, the Working Party felt that due to limited funds available and to be fair and equitable to other applicants, it needed to reduce the amount applied for. Members therefore considered it appropriate to fund £245,379 of the requested £250,000 (1.9 percent less) as this would not significantly adversely impact the CAWS' ability to operate, albeit recognising that it would need to be supported by alternative funding sources.
- 3.3.4 In 2022 to 2023, CAWS had been awarded a Community Chest grant of £215,000, therefore, whilst recommending a 1.9 percent reduction to that applied for in 2023 to 2024, it would still receive a £30,379 increase on last year's grant due to the 10 percent increase in this year's budget to support Cost of Living projects and from an allocation of central government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) monies. This increase on last year's grant has been recommended having recognised the likelihood of increased demand on its services during the current economic situation and associated cost-of-living crisis.
- 3.3.5 In addition, having received an additional £44,123 from the UKSPF for allocation and the 10 percent increase to eligible applicants in 2023 to 2024, this had meant that the overall Community Chest fund was greater than in previous years. Emphasis had therefore been placed on the fact that this level of grant to CAWS was unlikely to be sustained for future years.

#### 3.4 **Recommendations for no funding in 2023 to 2024**

- 3.4.1 The following applications were not supported on this occasion and have therefore not been recommended for funding from Community Chest:

33. Abbeycroft Leisure – Explore Outdoor, West Suffolk
34. Abbeycroft Leisure – Move More Outdoors, West Suffolk
35. CRE8 Theatre Productions CIC
36. The Bumblebee Children's Charity
37. Communities Together East Anglia, West Suffolk
38. River of Life Community Church, Haverhill
39. Homestart Suffolk, West Suffolk
40. Ormiston Families, West Suffolk
41. Restitute CIC, West Suffolk
42. Sharing Parenting – Community Outreach, Newmarket
43. Still Good Food CIO, Bury St Edmunds
44. Suffolk Mind, West Suffolk
45. Anglia Care Trust, West Suffolk
46. Bury St Edmunds Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society



47. Brandon Festival, Brandon
48. SOS Bus CIO, Newmarket
49. Honington and Sapiston Village Hall
50. Newmarket Town Council
51. Risby Village Hall
52. Young Lives Vs Cancer, West Suffolk

3.4.2 Reasons for this included:

- not meeting the eligibility and selection criteria;
- the quality of the application;
- lack of justification for the amount of funding requested and how it would be utilised;
- similar projects already existed in West Suffolk, therefore some projects could be consolidated with other existing organisations through effective collaborative working;
- whether the objectives of the project would benefit sufficient numbers of the community;
- projects holding a high amount of reserves and/or no match funding
- projects could be funded by alternative funding sources, signposting for which would be provided by officers where possible.

If the Working Party's recommendations are approved by the Cabinet, the officers will provide individual feedback to those applicants that have been unsuccessful and to those where funding has been reduced.

To further assist with organisational support, officers are engaged with external agencies to expand the profile of grant making platforms and have provided and hope to continue to provide training opportunities to assist West Suffolk organisations with subsidised training courses delivered by Community Action Suffolk.

## **4. Alternative options that have been considered**

- 4.1 The Council could choose not to provide any grant funding; however, it is recognised that some support to the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) is required. The Community Chest also enables the Council to commission services to support the delivery of its priorities.

## **5. Consultation and engagement undertaken**

- 5.1 The Grant Working Party had prior sight of the applications and spent several hours considering each application in turn. The Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities has attended meetings and his views and comments have been sought throughout the process.

- 5.2 Officers provided the Grant Working Party with research of local and national funders and information of internal West Suffolk Council departmental grants to provide rationale for each application.

## **6. Risks associated with the proposals**

- 6.1 Organisations are not aware of our approach to grants, which equates to a medium risk. Control – to implement a wide-ranging communication plan.
- 6.2 Requests for funding exceed the amount of money available, equates to a medium risk. Control – eligibility criteria and evaluation scoring matrix to be used to identify best fit and value for money.

## **7. Implications arising from the proposals**

- 7.1 Financial - Funding for grants are contained within existing budgets.
- 7.2 Personal Data Processing - As a non-decision making body, the meetings of the Grant Working Party were not held in public. Personal contact details of applicants have been held by the Council for internal use only.
- 7.3 Equalities - The Council's approach to grants has been subject of an Equality Impact Assessment and no negative consequences have been identified.
- 7.4 External organisations – regular engagement has been held with relevant VCSE organisations during the Community Chest funding process.

## **8. Appendices referenced in this report**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of applications and amounts of funding requested.

## **9. Background documents associated with this report**

- 9.1 Portfolio holder decision: 9 June 2022. Proposed changes to the Community Chest scheme criteria - Report number: [CAB/WS/22/024](#)