

Record of individual Cabinet member decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Decision made by	Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers
Key decision?	Yes – for two grants awarded over £25,000
Date of decision (same as date form signed)	3 April 2024
Name and job title of officer requesting the decision	Jayne Bolton Community Wellbeing Manager Report Author: Madeline Swain, Community Enablement Officer
Officer contact details	Tel: 07717271911 Email: Jayne.bolton@southandvale.gov.uk
Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To award capital grants for 2023/2024, to the organisations listed in appendix one, totalling £265,500 as recommended by the council's Community Grants Panel. 2. To award these grants subject to the conditions laid out in appendix two and three. 3. To transfer £265,500 from the provisional 2023/24 capital grant budget to the approved 2023/24 capital grant budget (A406) to fund these awards. 4. To delegate authority to the Head of Policy and Programmes to make minor changes to the policy and scoring criteria (if required), prior to opening the scheme in 2024/25.
Reasons for decision	<p>Background</p> <p>In August 2022, changes were made to the Capital Grants policy in response to feedback received from applicants, officers, the Community Grants Panel and Cabinet members, following a full review of the previous policy that was agreed by Cabinet 10 June 2021 and the subsequent update to the scoring criteria approved via delegated authority in October 2021.</p> <p>The main changes aimed to encourage equal opportunities for smaller organisations to secure the money they need, through allocating a percentage of the budget for smaller projects. Alongside giving the Community Grants Panel the discretion to recommend fully funding smaller projects up to the value of £10,000.</p> <p>The grant scheme opened for applications on 11 September 2023 and closed on 3 November 2023. Of the 20 submitted applications, 16</p>

	<p>moved forward to the scoring stage, one application was withdrawn and three did not meet the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Community Grants Panel (CGP) meeting At the Community Grants Panel Meeting (29 February 2024), officers and the panel used the agreed criteria in the policy to score the 16 eligible applications to identify high, medium, and low priorities for funding.</p> <p>High priority applications The CGP recommend that six applications ranked as high priority receive the full amount of funding requested. Of those, Chinnor Village Centre and South Stoke Community Shop presented extra information to the panel which they considered sufficient to increase their score by enough points to move from medium to high priority.</p> <p>Medium priority applications In line with the policy, once all high priority projects are awarded, those applications scoring as medium priority will receive between 50 to 75 per cent of the amount requested if there is a remaining budget.</p> <p>Didcot District Guide Association presented extra information to the panel which they considered sufficient to increase their score by enough points to move from low to medium priority.</p> <p>The CGP recommend that five of the eight medium priority applications receive 75 per cent of the amount requested due the amount of budget remaining.</p> <p>Thame Town Cricket Club Ltd, 1st Goring Heath Scout Group and Shedquarters scored medium priority, and the CGP recommend that these projects are awarded the full amount requested in line with the policy, which provides discretion to recommend fully funding smaller projects up to the value of £10,000.</p> <p>Low priority applications Two projects, St Leonard's Parochial Church Council and Henley Town Football Club, which scored as low priority projects, are not recommended for funding as per the policy.</p> <p>All awards are detailed in appendix one, and conditions of award in appendix two and three.</p> <p>A further round of Capital Grant in 2024/25 with a budget of £320,000 was approved at full Council Meeting on 22 February 2024.</p>
<p>Alternative options rejected</p>	<p>To make an award to St Leonard's Parochial Church Council and Henley Town Football Club, which scored low priority has been rejected.</p> <p>In line with the policy, should a project not score enough points to receive funding, there is the discretion to recommend a grant award of up to £10,000, however justification in line with the policy criteria could not be established to do so.</p>

<p>Legal implications</p>	<p>The council is using its general powers under Chapter 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to offer this funding.</p> <p>In line with the council’s constitution, the Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing has the authority to consider the recommendations of the panel and decide what grants to award.</p> <p>The 14 organisations receiving a capital grant will enter into standard grant conditions in line with the agreed policy. Organisations will also be subject to regular monitoring.</p> <p>Standard conditions for all grants awarded were updated slightly to reflect the Subsidy Control Act 2022 coming into force (appendix three).</p> <p>Additional grant conditions set are as detailed in appendix two. One of which relates to adding a Charge or Restriction to the Land Registry title register for South Stoke Community Shop.</p>
<p>Financial implications</p>	<p>The council has had a capital grant budget to fund Voluntary Community Sector organisations for several years now. A further £320,000 for 2024/2025 was approved by full Council on 22 February 2024.</p> <p>There are no additional financial implications as a result of approving these grant awards. The approved budget for 2023/2024 was £320,000 and it is recommended that £265,500 is awarded, therefore any remaining unspent budget will return to the council’s general reserves.</p>
<p>Climate implications</p>	<p>All applicants were encouraged to consider how they could embed climate considerations into their projects, many of whom did.</p> <p>The Capital Grants policy scoring criteria includes climate as a cross cutting theme that is scored. This encourages organisations to consider how their organisation, activities and services are working towards addressing the climate emergency. Applicants were also able select climate as the Corporate Plan theme their project is scored against, to recognise the contribution they will be making to take action on the climate emergency.</p>
<p>Equalities implications</p>	<p>No additional equality implications as a result of this decision. Access and inclusion have been embedded throughout the projects where possible.</p>
<p>Other implications</p>	<p>The main risk of funding these organisations is the possibility they don’t deliver against their project and complete the agreed works within the timeframe permitted by the policy.</p> <p>Officers mitigate against this through staged payment terms, usually with 50 per cent paid when we receive a valid signed acceptance form and conditions, and the remaining 50 per cent being paid on completion of the project, and confirmation applicants have met all the conditions. If there’s any unexpected delays to the project, applicants can request an extension. If the project costs less than expected, we will reduce our final payment accordingly. If necessary, we can request the return of some of the first payment.</p>

Background papers considered	Community Grants Panel meeting minutes 29 February 2024			
Declarations/conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/officer consulted by the Cabinet member?	N/A			
List consultees		Name	Outcome	Date
	Ward councillors	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Legal legal@southandvale.gov.uk	Pat Connell	Approved	19/03/24
	Finance Finance@southandvale.gov.uk	Emma Creed	Approved	15/03/24
	Climate and biodiversity climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk	Kim Hall	Approved. Would like to review the scoring matrix in the policy prior to launching the 24/25 scheme.	14/03/24
	Diversity and equality equalities@southandvale.gov.uk	Equalities team	Approved	14/03/24
	Communications communications@southandvale.gov.uk	Andy Roberts	Approved	19/03/24
	Senior Management Team	SMT	Approved	27/03/24
Confidential decision? If so, under which exempt category?	No			
Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chair?	No			
Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?				
Cabinet portfolio holder's signature To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Signature _Maggie Filipova-Rivers_____			
	Date __3 April 2024_____			

ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY.

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 4 April 2024	Time: 12.32pm
Date published to all councillors	Date: 4 April 2024	
Call-in deadline	Date: 11 April 2024	Time: 5pm

Guidance notes

1. This form must be completed by the lead officer who becomes the contact officer. The lead officer is responsible for ensuring that the necessary internal consultees have signed it off, including the chief executive. The lead officer must then seek the Cabinet portfolio holder's agreement and signature.
2. Once satisfied with the decision, the Cabinet portfolio holder must hand-sign and date the form and return it to the lead officer who should send it to Democratic Services immediately to allow the call-in period to commence.
Tel. 01235 422520.
Email: democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk
3. Democratic Services will then publish the decision to the website (unless it is confidential) and send it to all councillors to commence the call-in period (five clear working days) if it is a 'key' decision (see the definition of a 'key' decision below). A key decision cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires. The call-in procedure can be found in the council's constitution, part 4, under the Scrutiny Committee procedure rules.
4. Before implementing a key decision, the lead officer is responsible for checking with Democratic Services that the decision has not been called in.
5. If a key decision has been called in, Democratic Services will notify the lead officer and decision-maker. This call-in puts the decision on hold.
6. Democratic Services will liaise with the Scrutiny Committee chairman over the date of the call-in debate. The Cabinet portfolio holder will be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer the committee's questions.
7. The Scrutiny Committee may:
 - refer the decision back to the Cabinet portfolio holder for reconsideration or
 - refer the matter to Council with an alternative set of proposals (where the final decision rests with full Council) or
 - accept the Cabinet portfolio holder's decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately.

Key decisions: assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key'

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Constitutions now have the same definition of a key decision:

A key decision is a decision of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet member, or an officer acting under delegated powers, which is likely:

- (a) to incur expenditure, make savings or to receive income (except government grant) of more than £75,000;**

- (b) to award a revenue or capital grant of over £25,000; or**
- (c) to agree an action that, in the view of the chief executive or relevant head of service, would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward in the area of the council.**

Key decisions are subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure; non-key decisions are not and can be implemented immediately.

In assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key', you should consider:

- (a) Will the expenditure, savings or income total more than £75,000 across all financial years?
- (b) Will the grant award to one person or organisation be more than £25,000 across all financial years?
- (c) Does the decision impact on more than one district council ward? And if so, is the impact significant? If residents or property affected by the decision is in one ward but is close to the border of an adjacent ward, it may have a significant impact on that second ward, e.g. through additional traffic, noise, light pollution, odour. Examples of significant impacts on two or more wards are:
 - Decisions to spend Didcot Garden Town funds (significant impact on more than one ward)
 - Changes to the household waste collection policy (affects all households in the district)
 - Reviewing a housing strategy (could have a significant impact on residents in many wards)
 - Adopting a supplementary planning document for a redevelopment site (could significantly affect more than one ward) or a new design guide (affects all wards)
 - Decisions to build new or improve existing leisure facilities (used by residents of more than one ward)

The overriding principle is that before 'key' decisions are made, they must be published in the Cabinet Work Programme for 28 calendar days. Classifying a decision as non-key when it should be a key decision could expose the decision to challenge and delay its implementation.