

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
Date of decision (same as date form signed)	11 April 2022
Name and job title of officer requesting the decision	Kim Hall Community Enablement Officer
Officer contact details	Tel: 07917 088375 Email: kimberly.hall@southandvale.gov.uk
Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To award capital grants for 2022, listed in appendix one, totalling £320,000 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 £320,000 from the provisional 2021/22 capital grant budget to the approved 2021/22 capital grant budget (A339) to fund these awards. 4. To delegate authority to the Head of Policy and Programmes to make changes to the policy and scoring criteria, prior to opening the scheme in 2022/23.
Reasons for decision	<p>Background</p> <p>In June 2021, Cabinet approved changes to the Capital Grants Policy, adopting a thematic approach to improve outcomes for communities and deliver against the council's 2020-2024 Corporate Plan priorities. In October 2021, in line with the June 2021 Cabinet report, the scoring criteria was updated and approved via Delegated Authority, following consultation with the Community Grants Panel, Cabinet members and officers.</p> <p>The grant scheme opened for applications on 1 November 2021 and closed on 17 December 2021. Of the 18 submitted applications, 16 moved forward to the scoring stage. One application withdrew from the process and one application did not meet the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>At the Community Grants Panel Meeting (7 March 2022),</p>

officers and the Community Grants Panel used the agreed criteria in the policy to score the 16 eligible applications to identify high, medium, and low priorities for funding.

The Community Grants Panel recommend that the four applications ranked as high priorities receive the full amount requested.

An additional two high priority applications presented extra information to the panel which made a material difference to their recommended awards. SOFEA confirmed that they had received match funding towards the total project cost, therefore reducing the amount that was needed to fully fund the project. Sonning Common Parish Council reduced their project cost based on receiving a cheaper quote to do the work, thereby also reducing the amount of funds needed from the Capital grants budget. The Community Grants Panel recommend that these two projects are awarded the reduced amounts as detailed in appendix one.

In line with the policy, once all high priority projects are awarded, those applications scoring as medium priority projects can receive an equal share of the remaining budget, at 64.19 per cent of the amount they had originally requested.

One application from Wheatley Parochial Church Council, which scored as a medium priority project, is not recommended for funding as the panel has significant concerns about its financial viability, with almost £260,000 still to raise against a total project cost of £623,160 to complete the works.

The Community Grants Panel also recommend funding two low priority applications (Berinsfield Information and Volunteer Centre and Aston Rowant Parish Council) which ordinarily wouldn't receive an award. The panel feel that the digital divide is a really big factor in their decision to recommend awarding these two projects small amounts of funding. The impact of not providing a grant could have a greater detrimental effect on residents, for example, BIVC supports users with benefit claims and the newsletter is vital for people who don't have internet access/knowledge of how to use (particularly elderly people) and rely on it for their local information. The same could be said for the parish notice boards application from Aston Rowant Parish Council, which are used to display statutory notices and local information for this isolated rural community.

One project, from Woodcote Parish Council, which scored as a low priority project, is not recommended for funding as per the policy.

	<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 2022/23 with a budget of £320,000 was approved at the Cabinet Meeting on 17 February 2022.</p>
Alternative options rejected	None
Climate and ecological implications	The 2021/22 policy included a new climate score that encouraged organisations to consider how their organisation, activities and services are working towards addressing the climate emergency.
Legal implications	<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 under this scheme were approved by Cabinet on 8 October 2019 (appendix three). Additional grant conditions set are as detailed in appendix two.</p>
Financial implications	<p>The council has had a capital grant budget to fund VCS organisations for a number of years now. A further £320,000 for 2022/2023 was approved by full council on 17 February 2022.</p> <p>There are no additional financial implications as a result of approving the grant awards.</p>
Other implications	<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 staggered 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 one extension of up to 12 months. If the project costs less than expected, we will reduce our final payment accordingly. If necessary, we can request back some of the first payment.</p>

Background papers considered	Community Grants Panel meeting minutes 7 March 2022 (To follow)			
Declarations/conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/officer consulted by the Cabinet member?				
List consultees		Name	Outcome	Date
	Ward councillors	Via call in process		
	Legal	Pat Connell	Amendments made to address the feedback	16/03/2022
	Finance	Richard Spraggett	No comment	17/03/2022
	Human resources	N/a		
	Climate and biodiversity	Heather Saunders	No comment	16/03/2022
	Diversity and equality	Lynne Mitchell	Updated conditions	16/03/2022
	Health and safety	N/a		
	Insurance and Risk	Alison Holliday	No comment. The risks and mitigations as described are commensurate with the project's risk.	15/03/2022
	Communications	Andy Roberts	To work with communications at the appropriate time	17/03/2022
	Senior Management Team		Amendments made to ensure the report reads as a decision taken and minor changes to tidy the report.	06/04/2022
Confidential decision? If so, under which exempt category?	No			
Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chairman?	No			
Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?	No			
Cabinet portfolio holder's signature To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Maggie Filipova-Rivers Signature: Maggie Filipova-Rivers (by email) Date: 11 April 2022			

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

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 11 April 2022	Time: 16:42
Date published to all councillors	Date: 12 April 2022	
Call-in deadline	Date: 21 April 2022	Time: 17:00

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 or extension 2520.
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 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.