

Report of	Assistant Director of Communities	Author	Fay Mathers
Title	Voluntary Welfare Grant 2018-19		282968
Wards affected	All wards		

1. Executive Summary

Decision to allocate £230,000 Voluntary Welfare grant 2018/19 to groups or organisations through an application process. All projects must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Increasing volunteering across the borough.
- Helping people improve their skills for work or life.
- Preventing isolation and/or loneliness.
- Enabling people or groups to do more for themselves in their communities.
- Helping the most vulnerable people in our society to improve their quality of life and opportunities.

- 1.1 Over £500,000 worth of application requests were received. A total of £190,000 is to be allocated from April 2018 to the groups and organisations listed below. A further £40,000 to be allocated to Community360 to provide support to local groups to aid them in achieving their goals. In addition Community 360 will provide a monitoring service for Colchester Borough Council in relation to the funded groups to ensure targets and outcomes are being achieved.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To award funding to the following groups or organisations:

Organisation	Amount
Age Concern Colchester	£11,450
Beacon House	£13,000
Citizens Advice Colchester	£50,000
Colchester Furniture Project	£15,000
Colchester Emergency Nightshelter	£20,200
Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge	£50,000
Youth Enquiry Service	£30,350
Total amount allocated	£190,000

- 2.2 To award Community360 a grant of £40,000 on condition of signing a Service Level Agreement. This is to provide support to the voluntary sector in Colchester and monitor grants. This is outlined in Appendix B
- 2.2 The available funding does not allow allocation to all the organisations and groups who applied. Over £500,000 worth of requests were received. The following applications were not successful, either because the criteria was not fully met or was not as strongly met as those that are selected to receive funding.

Organisation	Amount
4 Youth Brightlingsea	£7200
Association of Pension and benefits Claimants CIC	£6207
Bright Lives	£50,000
Colchester Food Bank	£30,000
Colchester Volunteer Police Cadets	£20,000
Colne Radio	£7,850
Essex Blind Charity	£27,260
GO4 Enterprises	£20,000
Grassroots	£5,000
Interact	£7,500
MAZE Group	£5,110
Open Road	£30,000
Rural Community Council of Essex	£12,300
St Helena Hospice	£19,197
Sweet Ways to Stop Abuse	£9,674
The Warm and Toasty Club	£10,000
Wivenhoe Repair Reuse Recycle Community Interest Company	£19,154
Worth Unlimited	£44,000
Total amount	£330,452

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

3.1 To approve the grant funding allocations as agreed by the panel.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 To not award funding to the groups or organisations listed above.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The Voluntary Welfare grant has been allocated to Colchester groups or organisations for more than 15 years. Throughout that time the recipients did not have to apply for the grant and the payment was dependant on the negotiation and signing of a service level agreement or a condition of grant. All of the recipients delivered a service that met strategic plan outcomes.
- 5.2 In 2016 the Portfolio Holder for Communities made a decision that in order to make the Voluntary Welfare Grant open and transparent, it should be advertised for organisations to bid for.
- 5.3 To reduce the impact to groups who had received this grant for many years' meetings were held with each of the funding recipients to explain the change in allocating the grant. This provided 18 months' notice of the change to the groups to prepare for the potential loss of funding.
- 5.4 The application process opened online on the 24 July and closed on 29 September 2017. The minimum that groups could apply for was £5,000 and the maximum £50,000
- 5.5 All applications were considered and evaluated against the criteria along with the overall benefits that could be delivered and the portfolio holder for Housing and Communities decided on the final allocation set out in this report.
- 5.5 The funding is for a one year period and is paid in two instalments on condition of the signing of a negotiated agreement and demonstration through monitoring that targets and outcomes are being achieved.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 The Equality Impact Assessment for this grant award is on the Colchester Borough Council website at <http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/12744/Communities>
- 6.2 There will be no breach of human rights through this grant funding.

7. Standard References

- 7.1 The criteria for the Voluntary Welfare grant links directly with the Colchester Borough council Strategic Plan 2015-18

8. Strategic Plan References

- 8.1 The Voluntary Welfare grant 2018-19 support the Colchester Borough Council Strategic Plan 2015-18 by meeting the following;
 - Vibrant – Develop a strong sense of community across the Borough by enabling people and groups to take more ownership and responsibility for their quality of life. Create the right environment for people to develop and flourish in all aspects of life both business and pleasure.
 - Thriving – Be clear about the major opportunities to work in partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve more for Colchester than we could on our own.

- Welcoming – Ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place for residents, visitors and businesses with a friendly feel that embraces tolerance and diversity.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 During 2016 the Portfolio Holder and Council Officers met with all of the existing voluntary welfare grant recipients. The meetings provided an opportunity to explain the change in the way that the grant is being administered from 2018-19 and to allow groups to make alternative plans if they are not awarded a grant or a reduced grant.

10. Publicity Considerations

- 10.1 One group that has previously received a voluntary welfare grant and has not been allocated funding this year is the Rural Community Council of Essex. RCCE may try to reverse the decision made by the funding panel. The Council continues to support RCCE through a financial contribution to the Rural Housing Enabler.
- 10.2 The decision regarding which organisations to fund was made by the voluntary welfare grant funding panel in October. However, there are projects that were not successful in securing the funding and will be disappointed at the outcome.

11. Financial implications

- 11.1 Cabinet agreed the Voluntary Welfare grant funding of £230k in the fees and charges 2018/19 report.
- 11.2 The majority of grants will be paid in two instalments dependant on the return of satisfactory monitoring to Community360. The first payment in April 2018 and the second scheduled for October 2018.

12. Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 No community safety implications.

13. Health and Safety Implications

- 13.1 None

14. Risk Management Implications

- 14.1 No specific issues

Appendices

Appendix A - List of the funded groups and organisations

Appendix B - Description of the Community360 Service Level Agreement