

## **SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL - ARRANGEMENTS FOR GRANTS - COUNCILLOR DAVIS**

### **Executive Summary**

Attached are the Topic for Scrutiny Review Form (Appendix 1) and the report of the Executive (Appendix 2) held on 16 June 2022. Below is the draft minute extract for the meeting of the Executive.

#### **“9. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY GRANTS EXE22-046**

Councillor Forster, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the report which recommended to Council a proposed new partnership between the Council and the Community Foundation for Surrey whereby the Community Foundation would administer community grants on behalf of the Council. Councillor Forster explained that the proposed new approach would enable community beneficiaries to apply for funding from a range of sources through one single expression of interest to the Community Foundation, creating a ‘one stop shop’. It was noted that the Woking-based Community Foundation already administered the Woking Community Fund, as well as funds on behalf of Surrey County Council, Guildford Borough Council, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, and Spelthorne Borough Council. The administrative burden of the current grants process was raised, and it was highlighted that the new approach would allow Officer time to be used more productively by working directly with groups to advise and support.

Councillor Forster proposed an amendment to recommendation (ii) to include consultation with the Portfolio Holder. The Executive agreed the amendment to recommendation (ii).

Councillor Kemp, Shadow Portfolio Holder for Voluntary Sector, raised a number of questions regarding the proposal, including the decision making process, governance arrangements and Member oversight, and the proposed recipients of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which would provide secure funding. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that the Council would continue to retain full control of the grants in setting the annual budget for the fund and agreeing the criteria as per the strategic priorities of the Council. It was noted that the Portfolio Holder and Senior Manager would sit on the decision-making panel and an annual report would be received by Council. Regarding SLAs, the Executive heard that it was proposed that community groups considered essential by the Council, such as the York Road Project, would be offered an SLA in order to provide financial security. Discussions would be held with regular beneficiaries regarding the new approach.

Following a question, it was explained that it was proposed to combine the Council’s community grant budget to the existing Woking Community Fund.

The Executive welcomed the proposed new approach to community grants, which included the opportunity for the Council to incentivise increased investment into the endowment of the Woking Community Fund by match-funding private sector donations.

### **RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That (i) the proposed new partnership between Woking Borough Council and the Community Foundation for Surrey be endorsed and take effect for grants in 2023/24; and**

**(ii) delegated authority to be given to the Strategic Director – Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to oversee**

**Scrutiny Topic Proposal - Arrangements for Grants - Councillor Davis**  
**the new partnership between Woking Borough Council and the**  
**Community Foundation for Surrey.**

Reason: To improve the process for administering community grants.”

**Background Papers:** None.

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