

Forward Plan reference number: Not applicable

Report title: Approval of Community Challenge Fund (CCF) Applications	
Report to: Councillor Louise McKinlay – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance	
Report author: Richard Puleston – Director, Policy	
Date: 10 th November 2022	For: Decision
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County Divisions affected: County Divisions affected: Basildon Laindon Park and Fryerns, Basildon Pitsea, Abbey, Wivenhoe St. Andrew, Parsons Heath and East Gates, Maypole, Harlow South East, Harlow West, Harlow North, Canvey Island West, Canvey Island East, Clacton North, Clacton West, Harwich, Tendring Rural East, Clacton East, Brightlingsea, Frinton and Walton, Halstead, Hedingham, Three Fields and Great Notley.	

1. Everyone's Essex

- 1.1 The approval of these applications, received in response to the Councils' Community Challenge Fund (CCF), will directly support grass roots, community led action, that will be aligned to the levelling up places.
- 1.2 Levelling up and working with and empowering communities are key components of Everyone's Essex with specific commitments across all four of our strategic aims and as key operating principles for how we will work as an organisation.
- 1.3 As such these applications will work to directly contribute to delivering our levelling up commitments as well as acting as a catalyst for closer working with specific communities in the future.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance agrees to make grants from the Community Challenge Fund (CCF) set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Agree that no payments should be made with respect to a particular grant unless the recipient agrees to the terms and conditions of grant

3. Background and Proposal

- 3.1 Following a decision made in December 2021 the Council established a £500,000 fund called the Community Challenge Fund. The Council has established criteria for making grants under this Fund.

- 3.2 The Community Challenge Fund seeks to support new, not for profit schemes, groups, initiatives or ideas. Small scale community projects between the value of £300 - £5,000. The fund is specifically targeted at communities in the identified levelling up areas of Clacton, Harwich, Canvey, Harlow, Rural Braintree and parts of Colchester and Basildon.
- 3.3 The process for considering grant applications is that:
- Applications are reviewed on behalf of the Council by a Panel which has been created to advise the Council on such applications.
 - The Panel makes a recommendation to the Cabinet Member.
 - The Cabinet Member makes a decision on the grant.
- 3.4 Under this process the Panel have made recommendations as set out in appendix 1. The Cabinet Member is asked to consider the recommendations of the Panel and make a decision.
- 3.5 These proposals would see a total of £20,560 being approved, representing a cumulative total of £40,124 committed to date. This is from the initial £100,000 fund set pending review (see 6.3).

4 Links to our Strategic Ambitions

- 4.1 This report links to the following aims in the Essex Vision:
- Strengthen communities through participation
 - Unite behind a sense of identity
- 4.2 Approving the recommendations in this report will have the following impact on the Council's ambition to be net carbon neutral by 2030
- To build community capacity and provide a mechanism to support local community based environmental ideas.
- 4.3 This report links to the following strategic priorities of 'Everyone's Essex'
- Health, wellbeing and independence for all ages
 - A good place for children and families to grow

5 Options

Accept the Panel's recommendations and award grants as set out in appendix 1.

- 5.1 This option is recommended, because the grants have been considered by the Panel who have recommended that they be awarded. The Cabinet Member is required to be happy with the decision and is free to accept or reject any recommendation as they think fit.

Do not make grants

- 5.2 The Council could decide not to make any grants. This would have a negative impact on the projects some or all of which may not go ahead.

6.0 Financial implications

- 6.1 It was agreed on 20 December 2021 that £500,000 could be drawdown from the Everyone's Essex reserve to create a Community Challenge fund. This decision now sets out how that fund will be administered.
- 6.2 The fund will offer grants of between £300 and £5,000 Grants and applications will need to meet the criteria set and will be decided by an Officer panel.
- 6.3 The funding can be accessed across all areas aligned to Levelling Up and is available on a first come first served basis. There will be a review point once £100,000 of the funding has been allocated.
- 6.4 The Community Challenge Fund will run until the full fund is awarded or the 31 March 2023, whichever is the sooner.
- 6.5 The value applications recommended for approval to date are as follows:

Community Challenge Fund			£500,000
Awards Recommended by District	Awarded To Date	Tranche 4 Recommended	Total Award
Basildon	£5,900	£5,000	£10,900
Braintree	£704	£5,000	£5,704
Colchester	£5,100	£5,500	£10,600
Tendring	£5,860	£2,000	£7,860
Harlow	£0	£3,060	£3,060
Castle Point	£2,000	£0	£2,000
Total Awards Recommended	£19,564	£20,560	£40,124
Remaining balance yet to be awarded by 31st March 2023			£459,876

7.0 Legal implications

- 7.1 All applications for grants are considered by ECC officers against criteria, before recommendations are brought to the Cabinet member for approval. [include any requirements or conditions attached to the grant]

8.0 Equality and Diversity Considerations

- 8.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 8.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 8.3 The Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment (ECIA) indicates that the proposal in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

9.0 List of Appendices

- 1.1. Appendix 1 - A summary of applications for approval.
- 1.2. Appendix 2 – ECIA

10.0 List of Background papers

- 10.1 Applications and panel papers

Sign off process:

Grants under £100k do not require MO Sign off if the report uses this template.

Reports must be agreed by the Responsible Director named on the front of the report.

After this, the report can be submitted to the Cabinet Office who will arrange for the decision to be taken by the relevant Cabinet Member or endorsed by them prior to being submitted to Democratic Services for publication

The 'sign off' boxes below are deleted for cabinet reports but not for CMAs.

I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.	Date
Councillor Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnerships and Performance	30.11.22

In consultation with:

Role	Date
Richard Puleston, Director of Policy, Chief Executives Office	11/10/22
Nicole Wood, Executive Director, Corporate Services (S151 Officer)	11/10/22
Paul Turner, Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer)	11/10/22

Appendix 1 - A summary of applications for approval.

Application	Date of Decision	Decision
CCF 84	28/11/2022	Approved for funding
CCF 116	28/11/2022	Approved for funding
CCF 118	28/11/2022	Approved for funding
CCF 127	28/11/2022	Approved for funding
CCF 133	28/11/2022	Approved for funding
CCF 138	28/11/2022	Approved for funding
CCF 143	28/11/2022	Approved for funding for half of the requested amount

Application	CCF 84
Amount	£2000
Who	St Stephen's Church
Location	Colchester
Theme	Giving everybody a chance to get involved in where they live, Creating places or spaces where people are happy to spend time
How the money will support the community	<p>The church has run a successful youth club for many years looking after up to 70 children on a weekly basis in the New Town Area. This has suffered due to COVID and also the behaviours of the local children have become more challenging causing concern that running the club without additional support will be too challenging. We hope to reopen and create two spaces for 9/10-13 year olds and then an additional service for 13-18 year olds. We have spoken to the local PCSO 73919 Sarah Hardy and also the local district councillors who are very supportive of this project and recommended this fund. The local community have been asking since lockdown ceased when the youth group will restart. We hope to work with the YMCA who can provide two professional youth workers to run the club and volunteers. These youth workers will have the experience and expertise to work with children and young adults who have been causing antisocial behaviour in the local area. We hope that this will improve the community for the better and cut petty crime in the long term. It will also create a safe space for the local children with a safe space where they can be supported holistically. We hope to secure short term funding for the first year and then seek to apply for longer term funding in the future.</p> <p>The YMCA and the church wish to develop a sustainable youth group that can continue for many years. Prior to Covid the church group had been running for 20 years. Working with youth is not a short-term thing and so their needs to be an element of continuity. Therefore, it is important that this project continues longer term to give vulnerable children a sense of security and safety. The community have been missing the club being present.</p>
How the money will be spent	Therefore this money alongside some additional funding from the local councillors and church communities will be spent on this provision. 2 x YMCA youth workers @ £15 per hour. Sessions running 4hrs a week term time only (39 weeks) = £4680 per year. £500 for initial start up costs.
Additional Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What will the funds be used for? How will you make it sustainable / What are your plans once the funds are spent? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The funds will be used to fund one of the YMCA Workers, although we pay the YMCA in bulk for their services We have planned for sustainability for five years and have accessed funds from various sources to achieve this aim. We also have some funds from the church to ensure sustainability.

Application	CCF 116
Amount	£1,000
Who	An Individual Applicant - Townsend Twins
Location	Colchester
Theme	Giving everybody a chance to get involved in where they live
How the money will support the community	<p>My twin sister has recently set up her Park Play at the Old Heath Recreation ground and I am now looking to set one up either Greenstead Area or Shrub End depending on the best park location. Families, all ages of children will benefit as anyone can take part in a Park Play. Will engage with them through fun and games. We always start with a meet section so everyone can also take the opportunity to engage with each other. This can benefit as many people as we can 50+ if we can get the advertisement right too. My sisters park play currently has 20-30 people coming along so there's opportunities to advertise to more families within the chosen area. The session will be every Saturday 9:30am for an hour and a half. The funding will help to get new equipment to use for the park play, will help with all the advertising tools and help pay towards the time to get the sessions set up. This will be an ongoing long term session. The funding will also help me to find someone to take on my regular Saturday gym shift to transition to a park play sessions. Park play has helped lots of communities come together and this is something Colchester needs.</p> <p>It will be a weekly session every Saturday in one of the parks - it will run every week so families will always have a FREE session to join in with. The funding will be spent on the equipment and advertising of the session in the local area.</p>
How the money will be spent	<p>We would use the funding to help us get some new equipment to use for the park play sessions: For example - New outdoor weather proof speaker £250 and potentially a mic too if there's lots of people attending. £50/£100 - New equipment, cones, bean bags, parachute, footballs, goals - sports day style equipment £200/£250 . Will also use the funding to get sweets, teas coffees, waters each week for families to help the community too. Leaflets can be made by park play but £100-£200 would help towards time and work of distributing them to the local areas. The funding can also help to advertise in local news papers if there's costs for this too. The more funding received the more equipment/time we can put into advertising. Etc</p>

Application	CCF 118
Amount	£2,000
Who	Constituted Group - St Christopher's Church with Clacton Community Transition Group
Location	Tendring
Theme	Creating places or spaces where people are happy to spend time
How the money will support the community	The church and Clacton Community Transition group have begun a new partnership to enable the church grounds. health benefits, including improved access to food, improved nutrition, increased physical activity and improved mental health. Community gardens also promote social health and

	<p>community cohesion by offering a safe and welcoming space for people including socially-disadvantaged populations. and gardens to be fully accessible to the many hall users, including the toddler group, the CVST well being groups, Al Anon alcohol support, SAFSA domestic violence support group, the church, cafe users, happy club members and the general community to use of the grounds and gardens surrounding the church properties in order to engage with the community rewild and grown vegetables/fruit and pathways and encourage nature. We currently have about 130 users each week, but the community also use the grounds/buildings. We are planning to involve some of the young people's groups such as police cadets, sea cadets, scouts. The project should be completed by 31st March 2023.</p> <p>The plan is for the relationships with the partnership groups will continue to maintain the grounds and we would also look for other areas within our community to continue some of this work. The church hall users will continue to benefit from the work done, by being able to access the grounds more and nature will benefit from the measures taken.</p>
How the money will be spent	Raised beds and compost £600, Water butts £80, Compost area £120, Plants/seeds £500, Hedging £250, Seating £350, Signage £100

Application	CCF 127
Amount	£3,060
Who	Constituted Group - Razed Roof
Location	Harlow
Theme	Creating places or spaces where people are happy to spend time, Increasing and spreading opportunities
How the money will support the community	<p>Adults with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities have had a very challenging 30months during and since the pandemic. Many living with very elderly parents, or restricted in residential homes have been isolated and fearful during that time. Clubs and social groups closed; many have not re-opened. Razed Roof wants to offer some social evenings, specifically for this 'targeted' group in the community, in an environment where they will feel safe and supported. We would restrict the numbers according to the size of the venues we are able to access, enabling those with ongoing anxieties about Covid and their 'clinical vulnerabilities' to be reassured. We would have a target of 15 but going up to 30 if in a sufficiently large space.. We would offer sessions with a creative focus : music evenings with live music and opportunities to join in (drum along/sing along on a chorus); or a film evening (avoiding having to mix with large numbers of the general public in a cinema).. There would be refreshments provided , creating a break when participants can be encouraged to socialise... if they wish. We would anticipate the spend would be spent by April 2023. This project would help people who are feeling excluded to overcome their anxieties over leaving the home and to gain some confidence to start going out again. In turn people's sense of well-being will improve .</p> <p>If this project meets the need we have highlighted, we would look to continue the project. We would investigate ways to fund it : possibly with</p>

	charging (although our anticipated target-group are financially disadvantaged) or by applications to funding providers.
How the money will be spent	12 x 3hr sessions, each costing £255. Full breakdown of each session: Venue hire: £45 ; 2 members of support staff @ £45 each; expenses for volunteers and creative/musicians: £90; refreshments: £20; additional admin. costs: £10.

Application	CCF 133
Amount	£5,000
Who	Great Yeldham Men's Shed
Location	Braintree
Theme	Providing support in rural areas experiencing disadvantage
How the money will support the community	<p>We are setting up a Men's Shed in Great Yeldham, The Men's Sheds Association was originally set up as a meeting place for retired men. Research found that men's social and support networks usually revolve around work and when they retire this network can change or vanish completely, leading to social isolation and loneliness. The Sheds are set up across the country for a variety of activities including model making, gardening, carpentry, bike refurbishment and woodwork. They help reduce loneliness and isolation but most importantly, they're fun. We hope to bring this to Great Yeldham and the surrounding villages. We will be in contact with the local GP's so that they can let people know where there is a place to go to just meet and socialise in an unpressured environment. Men living in rural locations often have less opportunity to socialise in retirement, and this will be a great asset to the Great Yeldham area. We have sited two containers in Great Yeldham using an initial grant from MIND. We are converting them into a workshop. We hope to be open for membership by March 2023. We would use any grant provided to buy tools and material to furnish the workshop. Please contact me if you would like to visit our site. On the 19th October (our Inaugural Meeting) we will formally set up a Great Yeldham Men's shed Management Committee consisting of 10 Volunteers from Great Yeldham and the surrounding villages. At the moment we are working as an Ad hoc Group in conjunction with the Parish Council and the Essex Shed Network. It was following a meeting in the village held by Essex Shed Network that we got together and started this project. We have drafted a constitution, Code of Conduct, Dignity and Health and Safety Policies to be adopted at our first meeting on the 19th October. Our aims are to set up, manage and maintain a Men's Shed workshop in Great Yeldham, under the Umbrella of the Great Yeldham Parish Council, following the principles of the Men's Shed: 1) Reducing Isolation and Loneliness within the male community. 2) Encouraging healthy lifestyles 3) Sharing of Skills With the support of an initial grant from M.I.N.D. and the guidance of the Essex Shed Network we have sited two containers in the recreation ground which we are converting into a community workshop/space. You can follow our progress on our Facebook Group Page https://www.facebook.com/groups/482066230422000 We hope that we will have completed the conversion, which we are largely undertaking ourselves, by March 2023 when we will be able to open our</p>

	<p>doors to the public. We intend to reach out to surrounding villages through Social media, word of mouth, community magazine and Doctors Surgeries to let people know that there is somewhere men can go for some community interaction in an unpressured environment. Where they might learn skills, meet new people or simply enjoy sharing in working on a small project. One of our rules of Our particular group is that; at every session, we will all 'down tools' and take a 15 minute coffee/tea break in order to encourage social togetherness, chat and bonding. The Management Committee feel strongly on this issue and it is written into our code of conduct. Also included in our code of conduct is the following statement on Equal opportunities. The Group is committed to ensuring that all individuals involved with or using the services of Organisation name are treated with dignity and respect and that the Group is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere to all individuals regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age. The Group is also committed to ensuring equality of opportunity to all users, volunteers and staff. In summary, output from the project should have positive effect on relieving Men's isolation and Loneliness as well as support a healthier lifestyle by being part of a project and learning new skill or sharing ones skills with others. The Benefit to the local community will be that men from not just Great Yeldham but in surrounding villages will know that there is a place to go, open at convenient times, that they can visit, to just to be part of a group with no pressure and will know that they will be welcomed. We will measure success by the membership of the group, feedback from the community via our Facebook page and meetings of the Parish Council to whom we have to report on a regular basis</p>
How the money will be spent	<p>Spending Breakdown - Petrol Powered Generator (We are not Connected to the Grid) £2,000- Selection of Handtools (Saws, Pliers, Clamps, Hammers) £1000, First Aid Station £200 Lighting £500 Ramps for Disabled Access £200 Portable Work benches (Black and Decker Work mates) £200 Power Tools (Wood working Lathe) £900</p>

Application	CCF 138
Amount	£5,000
Who	Age Well East Ltd
Location	Basildon
Theme	Increasing and spreading opportunities, Giving everybody a chance to get involved in where they live, Creating places or spaces where people are happy to spend time
How the money will support the community	<p>Our project seeks to enhance connectedness within the communities of Harlow, Basildon, and Canvey Island, via the creation of three new friendship groups for adults (aged 18+), to combat acute levels of isolation and feelings of loneliness, as identified by our waiting list of 79 clients, eager to be matched to 1-to-1 Volunteer Befrienders. Each weekly community group will support up to 25 local people, (up to 75 people in total per week), for one year within an accessible venue. Attendees will be engaged via our Befriending Service waiting list, website, social media, leaflets & posters, word of mouth, and our Essex Wellbeing Service partners and hosted by either a DBS checked and in-house trained Befriending Facilitator or</p>

	<p>Volunteer[s]. Offering welcoming, warm and safe community spaces in the heart of Harlow, Basildon, and Canvey Island will bring lonely and/or isolated people together in a welcoming, warm and safe space that will enable people to socialise together, enjoy a hot beverage, play board and card games, be creative, and help facilitate activities of their choosing, such as inviting local guest speakers to share information and knowledge, (Community policemen and women for example, to improve fraud safety awareness etc.), will collectively give everybody, aged 18+, a chance to get involved in where they live, and generate community connectedness for significant increases in wellbeing. For those people within Essex communities already experiencing loneliness often or daily (Harlow 4.16%, Basildon 6.9%, and Castle Point [Canvey Island] 3.45%, according to the Office of National Statistics latest reports), the acute cost-of-living crisis this winter, will add additional pressures upon people within communities experiencing health and/or financial related hardships, that can each create significant barriers to social inclusion. This project seeks to mitigate these risks by increasing and spreading wellbeing improving opportunities (through friendship, participation, sense of belonging/ownership and access to information) to assist and empower people to build and develop long-term resilience. Our project can commence within 8 weeks of receiving grant funding, commence for 1 year and be fully completed prior to 31/03/24. We anticipate the long-term project benefits of removing the elongated wait for the availability of a 1-to-1 Volunteer Befriender, will create significant reductions in isolation and feelings of loneliness, via new fast-tracked opportunities to develop new friendships in new local spaces, that will promote increases in emotional and physical wellbeing, alongside confidence to try new things, enhancing community resilience. Project outcomes and success will be logged via our CRM system, Salesforce for Charities, (alongside beneficiary feedback and case studies) to assist the planning and development required to secure the continuation (and expansion potential) of this new project beyond the initial 1-year duration, alongside the necessary funding proposals to statutory sources and trusts and foundations to raise the required funds to enable us to continue to empower both direct, and indirect beneficiaries, (family members & carers), to live happier and healthier. We predict that longer term community engagement via increased community activities will reach more people in-need over time and promote a reduction in the reported loneliness rates by local authority, according to the Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk). Our community support reduces the burden on public emergency health-services by enabling those who are most vulnerable and often hard-to-engage, before they need acute-stage input, which by NHS calculations equates to an annual cost saving of £3,000 per person, preventing multiple admissions per year.</p>
How the money will be spent	<p>Venue hire x 3 for Harlow, Canvey Island & Basildon: £3,456.00 (based on £12.00 ph x 2 hours per group/per week x 48 weeks), Arts & crafts materials + tools x 3: £900.00, Board Games x 3: £100.00 (Chess, Draughts, Ludo, Scrabble), Trolley with wheels x 3: £120.00, Storage boxes x 3: £90.00 (1 x small 1 x medium 1 x large per group), Refreshments & snacks x 3: £500.00, Bluetooth speaker x 3: £90.00, Promotional materials x 3: £150.00</p>

	(posters & leaflets). Total cost per group per year x 3: £5,406.00 [The shortfall of £406.00 will be match-funded by additional fundraising].
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Application	CCF 143
Amount	Applied for £5,000, approved and funded for £2,500
Who	Bridgeway mission CIO, 1195873
Location	Colchester
Theme	Creating places or spaces where people are happy to spend time, Increasing and spreading opportunities, Giving everybody a chance to get involved in where they live
How the money will support the community	<p>I would like to start a new project for Bridgeway mission in the property we received, which we will set up a stitching hub for refugee ladies, who already have an experience of stitching. This helps to create an environment for them that they will love and spend happy times with other ladies to build friendship and improve English communication skills and we will also allow British people to be involved with them to improve their English communication skills. We will name this project, stitch and natter. The refugees will benefit from this project, which we are already connected with the families (refugees). It is known that there are 30 ladies, who would love to be involved with this project. We would like to spend the money to buy 10 sewing machines and materials to set up the stitching hub. We hope this session will be continuous.</p> <p>When the funds are spend and we set up the stitching hub, we will invite the refugees (ladies) to involve in these sessions, which will be benefit for them, as this will improve their confidence, self-esteem and they will be able to socialise more. This will also improve their mental health and well-being, as this will take them away from loneliness and isolation.</p>
How the money will be spent	10 sewing machines: £325 x 10= £3,250, plus materials: £1000, plus 6 volunteers x £50 DBS checks= £300, plus admission staff: £450. This gives a total of £5000

Appendix 2 – Equalities Comprehensive Impact Assessment