

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted for the Officer or Executive Member

No

Any conflict with any Member of the Panel and the bodies concerned **[No]** *If yes indicate who and what below*

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Resources

1. DECISION TAKEN

The provision of funding of **£3,305** from the Coronavirus Community Support Fund. The funding will assist organisations to meet the needs of the local community response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This funding is for the following applications:

£3,305 – to **African and Caribbean Seniors and Carers Lunch Club** for the purchase of 15 tablets, the hiring of an exercise instructor to host online classes (2 months) and Arts & Crafts materials and Stationery (2 months) as outlined in 8.1

2. DECISION TAKER

Service Director: Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member – Finance and IT- Cllr Ian Albert.

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

7th May 2021

4. REASON FOR DECISION

4.1 The Community Support Fund seeks to support essential services which find themselves under increased pressure owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This funding will support three specific areas in the first instance. These are:

- Provision of food and essentials
- Mental Health support (including loneliness caused by isolation)
- Domestic Abuse support

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 There are no alternative options being proposed other than those detailed within the text of this report.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

- 6.1 The Members of the Community Facilities Capital and District Wide Revenue Grant panel and Executive members for Community Engagement and Finance and IT were consulted via a virtual meeting held on Wednesday 24th March 2021.
- 6.2 Consultation with the respective officers and external bodies/groups has taken place with regards to these funding applications.

7. FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 **Applicant** African and Caribbean Seniors and Carers Lunch Club
- Project** African and Caribbean Seniors and Carers Lunch Club wish to purchase 15 tablets. This will allow them to continue to serve their members using online classes and courses. They also wish to hire an online fitness instructor (for a 2-month period) and would also like financial support for Arts & Crafts materials and stationery (2 months).
- Sum requested** £3,305
- Total project cost** £3,805
- Joint funding** £500 from other fundraising activities
- NHDC Policy met** Yes
- Council Priorities** Build thriving and resilient communities

Before the various Lockdowns the luncheon club used to meet every week. They provided a range of stimulating activities including seated, strength and balance exercise classes in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. This service enabled their members to socialise, establish and maintain friendships, thus preventing social isolation as well as providing respite for carers.

They arrange and provide information and advice sessions, on various topics including money advice, home safety, health and nutrition, Alzheimer's, diabetes and library service and when required signpost individuals to other agencies for further support and guidance.

A balanced meal was also provided, and they encouraged and raised awareness of the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise.

The luncheon club is focussed on older people and their carers in the Caribbean community. The services are available to the wider community who require support and advice regardless of their culture or background. Referrals are made to the club by; Self-referral, GP, social workers, Carers in Herts, community groups, friends, relatives and local churches. They support people with learning difficulties, visual

impairments, speech impairments, autism, mental health conditions, hearing impairments and physical disabilities.

During the Lockdowns, and periods of restrictions, sessions need to be run remotely using Zoom, WhatsApp and other platforms. The demand for the Lunch Club has increased due to the Pandemic and older people being particularly vulnerable to social isolation due to the Lockdowns and club closures. The Tablets will help deliver support and services to their members and will allow the club to operate virtually. It will also futureproof them from any further restrictions or Lockdowns.

It has been difficult to undertake the usual fundraising activities as it's not been possible to organise fundraising events, leading to additional financial pressure on the club.

As requested by the Grant Panel in their meeting of 24th March 2021 Officers have worked closely with the group to ensure that they are buying suitable devices and getting the best value for money. Mark Robinson, the IT Network & Infrastructure Manager for North Hertfordshire Council, has assessed the proposed device and advised the team on if the Samsung Galaxy Tab A7 was appropriate for the needs highlighted,

'The Samsung Galaxy Tab A7 would be the one to go with. It's a good tablet for all the functions that you listed, and it is also an excellent quality build. Big advantage is that the Android version support is version 11 which is the very latest also. The LTE version is so you can put a SIM card in and use mobile data out and about which may be a consideration if they are loaning these out to the users and the user won't have Wi-Fi but then they need to fund mobile data SIM contracts etc.'

All Members indicated their support for the application, the Panel recommended to provide grant funding up to the upper amount allowable for a District wide coronavirus support grant i.e. £5,000

At the meeting the group originally requested £3,670 however, since then some of their members had purchased devices of their own and they now only need 15 devices instead of 20 originally applied for. The group are still contributing £500 from a combination of their members contributions and their own budgets and the cost of the sessions for seated keep fit and arts and crafts has reduced. They have updated their application accordingly and stated that there are less sessions required this year. The costings outlined in the updated application are expressed below:

Tablets (15 @ £219)	3,285
Exercise instructor 2 months @160	320
Art and crafts 2 months	100
Stationery	100
Contribution from the group	(500)
Total	3,305

In addition, the prices at Curry's PC World have fluctuated over the time we have been working with the Caribbean Seniors and Carers Lunch Club on their application but currently they can buy 15 tablets as outlined above at a unit cost of £219.00. Therefore, the group have amended their application accordingly and the amount requested by the applicant has decreased since the recommendation of the Panel. The applicant has requested **£3,305**

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Following an urgent delegated decision by the Chief Executive on 3 April 2020¹ the uses of the Reserve have been extended to include “support the response to and reduce the impact of major incidents”. This allows it to be used for discretionary spend in response to Covid-19. The referenced delegated decision also ***“noted that any discretionary spend in respect of Covid-19 will be approved by the Service Director: Resources as Budget Manager, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT”***.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The total of funding recommended by in this report is £3,305 taking the total amount that has been recommended by the grant panel to £90,735

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Risk, the Council’s performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 All projects that are assigned to the Grant Panel for funding are assessed to ensure that they do not negatively impact on any part of the local community. The only deviation to this is where a minority or marginalised group may specifically receive funding or allocation of resources to address a particular area of need or ‘gap’ in provision.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this decision.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

15. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no pertinent Environmental Implications associated with any items within this report
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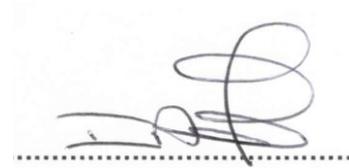
16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Officers have received and approved the grant application, mission statement and accounts. Covid 19 Special Reserve Fund 2020 (Community Grants) Protocol.

NOTIFICATION DATE

7th May 2021

Signature of Executive Member Consulted



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Date ...7th May 2021

Signature of Decision Taker



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Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS