

EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD

CABINET LEAD MEMBER: COUNCILLOR HARPER-DAVIES

ITEM MEMBER GRANTS SCHEMEThe Decision

That the Lead Member for Community Support and Equalities approves the following award under the Member Grants Scheme where the Ward Councillors have declared personal interests that might lead to bias:

That £991.36 be awarded to Birstall Business Co-operative for its Sibson Road High Street project. The project involves purchasing a further street planter and replanting the existing planters for the new season, to make the High Street more attractive for the local community. Planting is undertaken by volunteers and maintained by local businesses.

Reason

To approve an award under the Member Grants Scheme where the relevant Ward Councillors have declared personal interests that might lead to bias in connection to the organisation receiving the funding.

Other Options Considered and Rejected

None

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Decision-Maker

None

Dispensations

None

Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent

The Chair of the Scrutiny Commission has been consulted and has agreed that these decisions be exempted from call-in, given their nature and low financial value.

Approved: *SE Harper - Dav*

Date: *4/5/22*

Cabinet Lead Member for Community Support and Equalities

REPORT

Purpose of Report

To bring forward a recommendation for an award under the Member Grants Scheme where the Ward Councillors have declared personal interests that might lead to bias.

Background

Councillors Howe and Bentley are Ward Councillors representing Birstall Watermead. They wish to support the award of a grant to Birstall Business Co-operative for its Sibson Road High Street project. However the application has been made by Shona Rattray, as Chair of Birstall Business Co-operative. Shona Rattray is also a Borough Councillor representing Birstall Wanlip ward. Therefore, for transparency, the Cabinet Lead Member is being requested to act as the final decision maker in respect of the award of the grant.

Recommendation

That £991.36 be awarded to Birstall Business Co-operative for its Sibson Road High Street project (comprising Councillor Howe £500 and Councillor Bentley £491.36).

Reason

To approve an award under the Member Grants Scheme where the relevant Ward Councillors have declared personal interests that might lead to bias in connection to the organisation receiving the funding.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Member Grants Scheme was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 12th April 2018 (minute reference 116).

Under the scheme each Councillor is allocated £1,000 to fund local community projects within their ward (subsequently reduced to £500 in 2020/21).

Situations can arise where Ward Councillors are considering awarding grants under the scheme to organisations they have a connection to, which under the provisions of the Member Code of Conduct may result in them having a 'personal interest which might lead to bias'.

The Member Conduct Committee considered this matter at its meeting on 17th September 2018 and was of the view that in cases where a Ward Councillor has a conflict of interest that the grant application should be referred to the Cabinet for decision.

The Leader of the Council on 2nd October 2018 allocated this Executive function to the Lead Member for Communities, Safety and Wellbeing. This is reflected in Section 4.5 of Chapter 4 of the Council's Constitution. On 6th July 2020, the Leader re-allocated the function to the Lead Member for Community Support and Equalities.

Section 10.9 of Chapter 10 of the Council's Constitution requires that, where executive decisions are the responsibility of an individual member of the Cabinet, details of the decision (including any report) be published after the decision has been taken, as required by law.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The Chair of the Scrutiny Commission has been consulted and has agreed that these decisions be exempted from call-in, given their nature and low financial value.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

The grants can be funded from within existing identified budgets.

Risk Management

There are no specific risks associated with this decision.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Lead Member is being requested to make the final decision on the award of the grant in question because the Ward Councillors have declared personal interests that might lead to bias, and therefore the advice of the Monitoring Officer is that he/she should not be the final decision maker.

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| Key Decision: | No |
| Background Papers: | None |
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