



RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION

Key Decision ✓

SUBJECT: 'RCT Together' Community Action Fund

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To approve further funding of £10,000 to the 'RCT Together' Community Action Fund in order to support community groups and individuals take small actions that will benefit their local area.

In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended officer decision of the Director of Corporate Estates and Procurement.

DELEGATED DECISION: (DATE): 26/1/17

It was AGREED: that further funding is allocated to the Community Action Fund of £10,000 and it is subject to the same agreement with Interlink RCT and criteria as was previously adopted.


Chief Officer Signature

COUN ATYGO
Print Name

26/1/17.
Date

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution



CONSULTATION

Jay Gesser

26/1/17

CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE

DATE

D Harney

26/1/17

CONSULTEE OFFICER SIGNATURE (if required)

DATE

CALL IN PROCEDURE RULES.

IS THE DECISION DEEMED URGENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

YES

NO ✓

Reason for urgency:.....

If deemed urgent - signature of Mayor or Deputy Mayor or Head of Paid Service confirming agreement that the proposed decision is reasonable in all the circumstances for it being treated as a matter of urgency, in accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rule 17.2:

.....
(Mayor)

.....
(Dated)

NB - If this is a reconsidered decision then the decision Cannot be Called In and the decision will take effect from the date the decision is signed.



FOR CABINET OFFICE USE ONLY

PUBLICATION & IMPLEMENTATION DATES

PUBLICATION

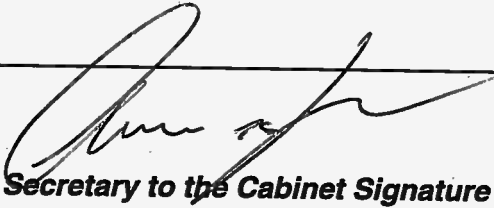
Publication on the Councils Website:- 27/01/17

DATE

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

Note: This decision will not come into force and may not be implemented until the expiry of 5 clear working days after its publication to enable it to be the subject to the Call-In Procedure in Rule 17.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

Subject to Call In the implementation date will be 06/02/17
DATE


Secretary to the Cabinet Signature

CHRISTIAN SS HANRAHAN
Print Name

26/1/17
Date



Further Information

Directorate:	Corporate and Frontline Services – Corporate Estates and Procurement
Contact Name:	Debra Hanney
Designation:	RCT Together – Community Asset Transfer Development Officer
Tel.No.	01443 744517

DELEGATED DECISION

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO ACCOMPANY A DECISION OF GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE AND FRONTLINE SERVICES

DATE: 25th January 2017

TITLE: 'RCT TOGETHER' COMMUNITY ACTION FUND

AUTHOR(s): Heledd Morgan, Debra Hanney

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended Officer decision of the Director of Corporate Estates and Procurement with a proposal to repeat the successful small grant scheme for volunteers and community members ('RCT Together Community Action Fund'), which has been successfully hosted by the County Voluntary Council, Interlink RCT.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 In recognition of the good work achieved through the 'RCT Together Community Action Fund' (see annual report at Appendix i), further funding is allocated to the fund and that it is subject to the same agreement with Interlink RCT and criteria as was adopted previously.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The need for a small grant aimed at community members and volunteers, who may not be part of wider constituted groups, was recognised by the Council as a way of helping people to take small actions that benefit their local area.
- 3.2 The 'RCT Together Community Action Fund' was agreed by Cabinet on the 15th December 2015 and has benefited many groups across the County Borough. The original fund of £10,000 is now depleted.



- 3.3 In order to continue this good work, the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group have put forward that further funding is allocated to the Community Action Fund to benefit more groups and volunteers in the coming year.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Under the Council's proactive approach of alternative service delivery - 'RCT Together' - it has been recognised that some volunteers and members of the community require a small amount of money to undertake basic tasks associated with developing and maintaining their community assets.
- 4.2 It was proposed that a small grant (the 'Community Action Fund') was made available for volunteers to either:
- a) undertake small scale community activity e.g. painting a room in a community building; or
 - b) reward volunteers in kind e.g. transport hire for a trip.
- 4.3 The fund was a total of £10K, funded through set aside available resources. If a delegated decision is approved that the funding is repeated, immediate action will be taken to ensure the fund is in place as soon as possible and community and voluntary organisations informed of how they can apply for funds.
- 4.4 Individuals / groups will be able to bid for £50-£500 at a time, once per financial year.
- 4.5 Interlink RCT hosted the Community Action Fund during 2015/16 with great success and more detail is included on these arrangements at Section 7 of the report.

5. PROPOSED FUND CRITERIA & APPLICATION PROCESS

- 5.1 The Fund will be branded as the "RCT Together' Community Action Fund" and advertised through the organisations of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group and to relevant local partners.
- 5.2 RCT CBC and Interlink RCT have a legal agreement in place for Interlink to host the Fund.
- 5.3 In brief, the Community Action Fund is open to any volunteers or community members that wish to undertake small scale community activity or reward fellow volunteers. For capital works, applicants will need to state the ownership / status of the asset and who holds responsibility for its maintenance.



- 5.4 Applicants do not need to be constituted to be eligible for the funding. It is the responsibility of Interlink RCT to check that the information provided in the application with regards to the group being constituted (or not) is correct.
- 5.5 Volunteers and community members can apply for the fund once every financial year. It is the responsibility of Interlink RCT to determine whether individuals / groups are attempting to repeatedly apply for the fund and whether funding to complete the activity or reward volunteers has been applied for elsewhere.
- 5.6 For applications up to £250, criteria for the funding will be community related activity.
- 5.7 For applications of £251-£500, the applicants will need to demonstrate a longer term effect of their spend i.e. items or expenditure that has more than a 'one-off' usage.
- 5.8 Individuals / groups will be invited to apply for the Community Action Fund through writing an e-mail, letter to Interlink RCT or through Interlink RCT's website. A short template is provided for applicants to outline their reasons for applying and state whether they are already linked to an asset or service transfer (in order to make appropriate links to the wider 'RCT Together' agenda).
- 5.9 Interlink RCT will be responsible for ensuring the individual or group applicant is competent to carry out the activity proposed e.g. are appropriate insurance policies in place; does the group have a safeguarding adults and children procedures in place?
- 5.10 Interlink RCT will assist and advise groups of cost effective materials e.g. furniture from 'Too Good Too Waste'; floor tiling from 'Greenstream'; paint from recycled usage, such as 'Community Re-paint'. Other forms of reward scheme should also be taken into account, such as 'time-banking', and recommended to certain applicants.

Applications for the Fund can range from £50-£500 and costings for materials, hiring vehicles etc. should be provided within the application.

- 5.11 Interlink will have the responsibility for approving applications.

6. MONITORING

- 6.1 It is proposed that Interlink RCT make the appropriate checks with other officers involved in the 'RCT Together' approach before approving the fund to avoid double-funding activity.
- 6.2 Receipts for all expenditure will be required by Interlink.



- 6.3 Criteria of the fund will stipulate that any application up to £250 will be required to simply promote the fund, take photographs to evidence how the grant was used, such as "before" and "after" photographs, and inform the Local Ward Member that they have successfully secured the funding.
- 6.4 For applications of £251-£500, applicants will need to write a short report with photographs (e.g. "before" and "after" photographs) and / or video evidence of how the money was used and the long-term impact of the funding. They will also inform the Local Ward Member that they have successfully secured the funding.
- 6.5 Interlink will underwrite the funding, if:
- receipts are not received from an individual or group by the end of the financial year, funding will shift to Interlink funding, to avoid audit trail issues.
 - there is an individual or group that may be found to lead to concerns for any reason (e.g. safeguarding, political activity, fraud etc.), Interlink will shift them over to be funded from Interlink reserves / funding.
- 6.6 Some basic performance indicators will be put in place as part of the legal agreement with Interlink RCT, to ensure that good work is being captured for the wider 'RCT Together' approach.
- 6.7 Interlink RCT will be required to provide a monthly update to the Voluntary Sector Liaison Steering Group on applications awarded.

7 COMMUNITY ACTION FUND - HOSTING ARRANGEMENTS

- 7.1 Interlink RCT (the County Voluntary Council) hosted the fund on behalf of the Council. The rationale for this hosting arrangement is the increased flexibility, monitoring and speed at which payments can be made by a voluntary sector organisation to another body, compared to possible delays in administration through a larger public sector body.
- 7.2 Interlink RCT also have the relevant experience of such funding - the organisation already operates a Development Fund totalling £5K, with a maximum application of £500.
- 7.3 The Chief Executive of Interlink RCT agreed to host, administer and monitor the fund on behalf of the Council. In practice, a legal agreement with Interlink RCT, setting out the terms agreed between both parties (the Council and Interlink RCT) and their roles in the scheme has been put in place.
- 7.4 Interlink RCT have kept to these terms and have confirmed that they will keep the Council updated with complementary Interlink funding for audit purposes and for evidence of value added. This is also to avoid any double-funding of projects.

8 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this decision, as it applies to the general population i.e. anyone will have access to the fund.

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The Council has no legal duties to consult on this decision, but partner organisations have been consulted and agree to the approach.

10 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The fund will be a total of £10K, funded through available resources.

11 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Advice has been sought from Legal Services and the Local Authority is able to establish such a fund with reference to :
- *Section 111 Local Government Act 1972 - provides that a local authority shall have power to do any thing (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions*
 - *Section 2 Local Government Act 2000 - provides that every local authority in Wales have the power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects - (a) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area, (b) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area, and (c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area. This power allows the Council to (a) incur expenditure, (b) give financial assistance to any person, (c) enter into arrangements or agreements with any person, (d) co-operate with, or facilitate or co-ordinate the activities of, any person, (e) exercise on behalf of any person any functions of that person, and (f) provide staff, goods, services or accommodation to any person.*



12 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP.

- 12.1 The 'RCT Together' approach is key initiative of this Council and has strong links with Medium Term Service Planning and wider Single Integrated Plan priorities.

13 CONCLUSION

- 13.1 The need for a small grant aimed at community members and volunteers, who may not be part of wider constituted groups, has been recognised by the Council as a way of helping people to take small actions that benefit their local area. The continuation of the 'RCT Together Community Action Fund' will assist communities in taking forward small scale initiatives.
- 13.2 It is recommended that a delegated decision is obtained to sustain the approach and agree to the continuation of the fund as soon as possible.

Other information:

- ***Scrutiny:*** Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee.
- ***Background papers:*** Appendix 1 – overview and case studies of Community Action Fund spend to date.
- ***Contact officer:*** For further information, please contact Heledd Morgan - 01443 680 527.



Appendix I



The 'RCT together Community Action Fund' was launched as part of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Councils (RCTCBC) asset transfer scheme 'RCT Together', with £10,000 given to Interlink to provide grants to support small groups to deliver and develop projects at a grassroots level, for the wider benefit of the community. The grant was available to volunteers or community members in Rhondda Cynon Taf to undertake small scale actions that would benefit their local area.

Interlink RCT awarded £10,000 to 26 individuals or groups. The fund proved to be very popular with communities and small groups and Interlink received 52 applications with a total value of £25,169. Many groups were supported to access other grants, for example, Lee Gardens Pool went on to apply to funders such as Coalfields Regeneration Trust and Awards for All Wales; while three groups were supported to Interlink's own Development Grant securing an additional £1,350. This meant greatly increasing the total amount of funding raised in addition to the £10,000.

Cllr Joy Rosser, Rhondda Cynon Taf Council's Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Wellbeing and Communities, said

"By working with those in the hearts of our communities, we have been able to deliver small-scale investment which has made a huge difference, bringing people together, delivering important help and supporting our communities."

Safe Families for Children Wales received £460 to run training for volunteers who care for children to reduce the likelihood of them entering foster care. Their volunteers are fundamental to the organisation.

One of the families commented, *"If it was not for my volunteer, my daughter would be in care by now, can I keep my volunteer forever?"*





Canolfan Pentre were given £500 to purchase kitchen equipment to help them open a community café. The support Interlink provided also resulted in them successfully applying to the Development Fund for an additional £500 and gave them the additional and knowledge that they confidence to apply to the Welsh Church Fund.

Elizabeth Williams, said, *"Interlink helped us at the very beginning of our project, funding vital kitchen equipment, this meant we could open our doors to the public enabling groups and community projects to run from our centre. They helped get us off to a flying start."*

Clive & Christine Sheridan, community residents in Treherbert, were given just £159.60 to create flower beds and hanging baskets.

Clive explained, *"This has been achieved with the support of the RCT Together Fund . . we have been providing these displays for the community for many years now and the soil was badly in need of replenishing. The funding we have received will help us maintain these displays for the next few years. Partly because of our involvement in this project, the Mayor of Rhondda Cynon Taf awarded us his*

Good Citizen Award."



Springfield Sheltered Housing Complex in Ynyshir received £500 for plants, soil and the purchase of hanging baskets, which they used to finish off the communal garden. The group received £9,500 from RCT Homes Environmental Grant and £800 from Awards for All Wales for patio furniture.

Scott Donavon, Scheme Co-ordinator explained, *"The Interlink grant was vital in providing the finishing touches to the garden area. We used the funds to purchase soil, plants and flowers to fill the new raised planters. We've created a warmer, more accessible outside space for elderly residents, as well as bringing the area up to RNIB visually better standards".*

Before

After



Rhydyfelin Community Group received £500 to hold teas dances, bingo and pay for accessible transport for the group.

The secretary said,

"Our latest outing was to Tenby 31st July, we took two coaches, one for the more mature and one for the under privileged families. A great time was had by all. Our other main success this year was a family fun day and evening. This was held 25th June at the local football field. The response by those that attended was fantastic. There was something for all ages, tea cups rides for the smaller ones, football, Jazz Band,



horse rides, Falconry, small petting animals, Fire Service, local police, Face Painting, Arts and crafts, and a host of stalls providing Indian Head massage, information etc. Our aim was to provide the community with a free fun day, we paid for all the rides, animals etc to attend, all they had to pay for was snacks and drinks. It was a wonderful day and a lot of smiling faces. To do something for the community in which you live is very rewarding, but of course this would not be possible without the grants that we receive, and for this we are very grateful."



Lee Gardens Pool raised funds from local business, individual donations , community fundraising activities and



crowd funding.

However they were still short of what they needed to get the pool ready for their summer opening.

"RCT Together proved invaluable here as they were able to guide us towards our funders and continue to be a massive help and support to us. Once the funding was secured, Gareth Jones Builders got to work repairing the pool and they did a very good job. But now the pool looked gorgeous with its bright blue floor, golden steps and cream coping stones . . . we were all exhausted but very proud of what has been achieved. The committee and volunteers are excited at what can be achieved ready for next year. We have been awarded a 'Celebrate' Lottery Grant and will have a big party to introduce 'Nina the Gnome', our new mascot to everybody. New grant applications are being prepared and the monitoring is taking place for grants we have already received".