

REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 6
DATE OF MEETING:	24th JANUARY 2019	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)	OPEN
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SUBJECT:	GRANT APPLICATIONS & COMMISSIONS - ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROJECT TEAM 2018-20	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: G

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That a programme of funding applications, that includes an application to the National Lottery 'Reaching the Communities' Fund, to support the work of the Council's Environmental Education Project (EEP) as set out at Appendix 1 is approved.
- 1.2 That the Committee endorses liaison with the National Lottery to secure grant funding of £150k from its 'Reaching Communities' Fund to support and extend the work of the EEP team for the next five years.
- 1.3 That the Committee supports further research into ways of extending Swadlincote Heritage Trail without commitment of match funding by the Council
- 1.4 That subject to the continuation of funding arrangements, fixed-term contracts for staff are extended to the end of the next funding period.
- 1.5 In the event that funding is not available or not to the level that can sustain the existing staffing resource that the employment procedures used by the Council for permanent members of staff are followed that will include full consultation with employees and their representatives where appropriate.

2.0 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 To provide an update of the programme on current and potential future funding applications being developed by the Environmental Education Project (EEP) Team to support its work utilising existing resources as match funding.
- 2.2 This includes a bid for £150k from the National Lottery Reaching Communities fund to deliver environmental education projects over the next five years.

- 2.3 To seek the Committee's support to explore the potential for the Swadlincote Heritage Trail to be extended without the need for Council match-funding.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The EEP Team has an annual work programme developed in conjunction with its funding partners Rolls-Royce plc and the National Forest Company. A diverse range of environmental education activities are provided that meet key priorities under the Council's Corporate Plan. These include providing the Environmental Forum network to support parishes and other groups and engaging with school and other groups on activities that encourage them to learn about and protect their local environment, particularly relating to The National Forest. Activities that link to the Raising Aspirations agenda are also included, in particular the heritage trail work gives young people role models across a range of sectors/ industries.
- 3.2 The EEP Team has an annual budget of between £125-150k half of which is provided by the Council the rest from securing external funding and income from delivering services to other partners
- 3.3 At any point in time the Team will be considering a number of potential funding applications which will help to achieve the work programme. Grants help to broaden the scope and geographical area covered and subsidise programmes to keep costs to the public and the Council to a minimum.
- 3.4 The EEP Team is also invited to apply for grants at short notice as it has established a reputation for high quality delivery within the community/ environmental fields. Through having an agreed work programme a grant opportunity can be pursued (or disregarded) by the Team where it fits the overall aims and objectives agreed to make the most effective use of the resources that are available.
- 3.5 Currently there are five small (under £5k), one medium (£5-30k) and one large (over £30k) applications/ commissions which the EEP Team is pursuing funding for. See Appendix 1. These cover activities linked to environmental action, enabling people to improve their own local environment and activities linked to engagement and environmental discovery.
- 3.6 A larger application to the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund for £150K is also being considered. This would be for work over a five-year period. .
- 3.7 The Team is actively pursuing other grant and/or commission opportunities covering the work areas in paragraph 3.4 above, plus funded work with schools (e.g. forest schools, food waste reduction, cultural activities linked to literacy, history, Egyptology) and opportunities to expand Swadlincote Heritage Trail for the public and schools.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no additional financial requirements of pursuing the EEP's grant funding programme over and above the existing budget and staff time being used to match fund these applications. Delivery of projects is based on a full cost recovery model.

5.0 Corporate Implications

Employment Implications

- 5.1 Aside from the Environmental Development Manager who is now on a permanent contract, another six members of staff are on fixed term contracts that end on 31st March 2020 to tie in with existing funding arrangements.
- 5.2 If additional funds are not obtained then a number of these posts may have to be deleted. Should any members of staff then have a minimum of two years continuous service they would be entitled to a redundancy payment and if aged 55 or over and a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme be given immediate entitlement to their pension which may then realise additional pension strain costs back to the Council.
- 5.3 The Fixed-Term (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 ensure that fixed-term employees are not treated less favourably than comparable permanent employees. The terms and conditions provided are in line with the NJC for Local Government Services and therefore the same as comparable permanent employees.
- 5.4 Any employee on fixed-term contracts for four or more years will be considered as a permanent member of staff unless the Council has a clear business reason for the continuation of the contract on a non-permanent basis. The six members of staff on fixed-term contracts are funded by partners and it is considered this provides the justification for the continuation of fixed term contracts.
- 5.5 Five members of staff on fixed-term contracts will have over four year's continuous service when their current contract expires on 31 March 2020. Whilst it is proposed to continue with the previous contractual arrangements, the Council will follow the same employment procedures should the funding either be stopped or lower than expected requiring a reduction in the current workforce.

Legal Implications

- 5.6 None explicitly associated with this report. However, for each funding stream the Team would need to consider the legal implications of accepting the grant funding and complying with the grant terms and conditions prior to acceptance, seeking advice from the Legal team where appropriate.

Corporate Plan Implications

- 5.3 Progress – improving the local area, particularly linking to The National Forest to make South Derbyshire a better place to live work and visit; also improving the skills of the local workforce.
- 5.4 Place/ People – expanding the offer made to people for cultural activities and events; developing the workforce by improving and extending the provision of education and training/ raising aspirations. Increasing participation levels has a direct impact on the physical health and mental wellbeing of participants.

Risk Impact

- 5.5 Not applying for grants and commissions means that 50% of annual running costs for the EEP Team are unfunded. This will affect the services offered free to residents and partners, like the Free Tree scheme rather than the activities that are charged for, e.g. to schools

6.0 Community Impact

Consultation

- 6.1 Grant awarding bodies require robust consultation evidence and the Team collect evaluation and survey information from customers which are used in applications.

Equality and Diversity Impact

- 6.2 The enhancement of existing services that are geared to provide a range of accessible activities to residents

Social Value Impact

- 6.3 The enhancement of existing services that provide activities for young people and adults that enhance their physical and mental well-being

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.4 The EEP Team contributes to the Corporate Sustainability Group and work areas will reflect direction from and support the work of this group.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 Applying for grants and commissions is part of the EEP Team's work. It is based on an agreed annual work programme and the applications made and finance secured each year goes towards the running of the service, providing benefits for South Derbyshire and its residents.
- 7.2 By endorsing the programme of grant funding applications to enhance the EEP Team the Committee will be enabling added value to the Council's investment in the EEP Service.

8.0 Background Papers

- 8.1 Summary of grants and commissions being investigated by EEP as of 1st Dec 2018 – Appendix 1.
- 8.2 EEP annual work programme 2013-2019– Appendix 2