

CABINET

DATE OF MEETING: THURSDAY 7th SEPTEMBER 2023

TITLE OF REPORT **ROUNABOUT SPONSORSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL GRANT FUNDING**

Report of: **Executive Director - Community**

Cabinet Portfolio: **Leader and Strategic Direction, Partnerships**

Key Decision: **Yes**

Reasons for Urgency

Confidentiality: **Non-Exempt**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To conform the arrangements for the allocation of funds received from roundabout Sponsorship.

RECOMMENDATION

- a) That Cabinet agrees to continue to support the delivery of biodiversity, climate change, and health and wellbeing projects throughout the district by the allocation of grant funding collected from roundabout sponsorship.
- b) Provided that:
 - i. the aggregated value of approved projects does not exceed the income received from roundabout sponsorship in that financial year; and
 - ii. the projects can demonstrate that there is a clear benefit for biodiversity, climate change and health and wellbeing

The Countryside Manager is authorised to agree all projects up to £10k and the Leader is authorised to agree any projects that are over £10k

- c) That Cabinet agrees to continue to keep in reserve funding to help maintain a standard of service to continue to retain existing and attract potential customers.

BACKGROUND

2. The Council has successfully been running a roundabout sponsorship scheme for over 10 years. It raises between £15k to £50k annually which is set aside for projects that benefit biodiversity, community well-being, and (more recently) climate change.
3. The scheme supports the delivery of the adopted Biodiversity Action Plan 2018-23. By “supporting existing wildflower projects and developing new opportunities” and “supporting small enhancements across the district”.
4. The funding can be used to provide community-based enhancements throughout the district. It is available to any organisation that can deliver a community project like the recent Heatherside Infant School Biodiversity and Wellbeing Garden Project.

5. The funding also helps deliver projects on Hart-owned land and is used to support projects like wildflower and tree planting.

CONSIDERATIONS

6. An element of the income received from roundabout sponsorship is reinvested to improve the landscape design of roundabouts within the scheme.
7. Administered correctly, the scheme can continue to play an important part in facilitating the delivery of readily accessible funding for local small project enhancement projects which support biodiversity, well-being, and climate change.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

8. The option of not reinvesting income from roundabout sponsorship back into council reserves was considered but discounted as this would not deliver the biodiversity, climate change, and health and wellbeing benefits identified in this report.
9. Not holding a reserve of funding will mean that a level of consistency for delivering both the grant and the sponsorship scheme would be compromised. By holding a reserve, An even cash flow can be maintained to support repair/enhance roundabouts as well as delivering grant funding without issue.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or The Hart Vision 2040

10. The development of the Strategy will help deliver “Theme 3” of the Hart Vision by reducing the impact of climate change.
11. Reducing the impacts of climate change is also a Corporate Priority and the Council has declared a carbon emergency that commits us to reach net zero by 2035.

Service Plan

- Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan? NO
- Is the proposal being funded from current budgets? NO
- Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal? Yes.

Legal and Constitutional Issues

12. Legal issues are considered as part of the grant funding application process.

Financial and Resource Implications

13. The council currently provides a mechanism for the sponsorship of roundabouts within the district, and this makes an average of £35,000 per year in profit. However, there can be a fluctuation in the level of profit margins, and over the last 4 years, it has seen highs of £51,000 and lows of £13,000.
14. To help manage cash flow surplus from high years is transferred into a reserve that is kept specifically for the delivery of projects. This helps maintain the condition of roundabouts and provides for specialist renovations to help the business stay attractive for sponsors. It also helps fund larger schemes and supports the delivery of projects through less profitable years.

Risk Management

15. There are no risks in the delivery of the scheme. However, the provision of a reserve is essential to maintaining business continuity.

EQUALITIES

16. It is not expected that there will be any equality issues in delivering this Strategy.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

17. This scheme supports the delivery of local sustainability projects.

ACTION

18. Subject to the recommendations of this report being approved, the Council will continue with the delivery of the community grant scheme.

Contact Details: Adam Green

Appendices

None

Background Papers:

[Grant Scheme .docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)