Appendix 1

Disability Inclusion Fund – draft scheme for consideration

Objective: The Disability Inclusion Fund scheme is designed to provide a flexible and responsive grant mechanism for small awards to be made to voluntary and community groups in Eastbourne, or to the council itself, for the purposes of promoting disability inclusion.

Criteria for Spend:

- The primary use of this funding should be for one-off spends that have a positive impact to further disability inclusion.

- The funding can be used for projects that enhance community facilities, improve the accessibility of facilities or improve quality of life for those with disabilities. In particular, bids will be welcomed which;
  - aim to improve the experience of disabled people in the borough
  - enable disabled children to be more fully included in mainstream activities, events or services
  - aid the inclusion of those with a hidden disability

Awards will usually be of up to £1,000. In exceptional circumstances larger awards may be considered.

Funding and scheduling:

- The total fund is £20,000 for the year.

- All projects must be considered, approved, implemented and paid for within the financial year 1 April to 31 March.

- Where projects require scheduling and delivery by Council departments, reasonable time should be allowed to enable projects to be completed within the financial year. To this end, all such schemes need to be submitted to relevant officers by 31 December to enable a reasonable chance of this being achieved.

- All schemes involving payment to third party groups must be finalised and submitted by the end of February to enable sufficient time for the scheme to be processed and payments issued by financial year end.

Eligibility:

- Eligible projects are where the work is to be sourced either:

  Internal

  (a) From within the Council’s service departments or procured via relevant service officers with contractors or other authorities. In these cases, preliminary research needs to establish the full cost of the work, including administrative costs, and the
viability of the project to be delivered, by councillors with the relevant officers in advance of making and submitting decisions for work to commence and funding to be released.

(b) When completing the request form, councillors should consider and agree a reasonable timescale for delivery of the scheme in conjunction with the relevant officer.

External

For awards made to local community groups/clubs subject to:

(a) The fund being used for the purchase of essential equipment or necessary repairs and refurbishment to premises or costs towards new/improved facilities or services.

(b) Onus being on the community group to obtain owners consent where the proposal involved work to premises or on land owned by another party.

(c) Onus being on the community group to demonstrate in their application the community need and worth of the proposal, which could include gathering supporting evidence such as letters, emails, testimonials and photographs etc.

(d) Where relevant, the community group must have applied to be considered under the councils Access Accreditation Scheme (once this has commenced).

(d) Agreement by the Disability Inclusion Task Group (see below), in advance of purchase in respect of consents, amount, equipment purchase and/or works to be done, with reimbursement only after proof of purchase and/or works done and/or where members are satisfied that the project will and can only go ahead if funds are given in advance.

(e) The responsibility for obtaining the equipment or procuring the work being with the community group.

(f) All such projects to be one-off initiatives with no subsequent funding implications for the Council.

The Council’s Safeguarding Policy:

Eastbourne Borough Council’s Safeguarding is committed to ensuring we do all we can to protect the welfare of children, young people and adults and minimising the risks of abuse within any services we provide or fund. The Council’s Safeguarding Policy states that “Support for programmes which involve children, young people or vulnerable adults (funding, premises, etc.) will be subject to those organisations providing evidence of effective policy and procedures on child and vulnerable adult protection. This includes all those managing any of our buildings or with a licence to run services from any of our buildings.”
To help us comply with the policy, if any children or young people under the age of 18 are involved in delivering the project or if the project will involve working in settings where there will be significant contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, the following will apply:

(b) Safeguarding Policy / Procedure to be provided

(c) Risk assessment covering safeguarding issues relating to this project to be provided

(d) If you are using contractors they are to provide a copy of their own Policy and Safeguarding Risk Assessment.

It may be helpful to refer to the Council’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedures - https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/about-the-councils/safeguarding/

**General rules:**

- Where intended work involves any form of construction on land not owned by the Council, the consent of the landowner must be obtained as part of the preliminary research before a decision is made.

- Proposals that could adversely affect community inclusiveness cannot be supported.

- Proposals that involve work to be provided by the Council that is already programmed to occur within the current financial year cannot be supported.

- Where a project would require a significant increased obligation for year-in year-out commitments from the Council’s general revenue fund for maintenance, the work cannot be supported.

- Proposals that require work that cannot be lawfully undertaken by the Council cannot be supported.

**Disability Inclusion Task Group:**

A Disability Inclusion Task Group will be established, comprising the Deputy Chief Executive or an officer authorised by him, the Cabinet Member for Disability and Community Safety and two other councillors appointed by the Cabinet Member. The role of the Task Group will be to:

- Encourage bids to the fund

- Consider bids, consider whether bids meet the criteria for the fund, and

- Through the Deputy Chief Executive, make decisions on awards.

**Process Sequence:**
• Task Group to promote, and encourage other Members to promote, the availability of the fund using party literature, ward surgeries, leaflets, posters, etc and encourage individuals and groups to submit suggestions for proposed projects and needed work.

• Task Group to consider projects proposals and suggestions and make preliminary investigations with relevant service delivery officers or community groups to establish cost and viability of projects.

• Task Group to consult with any residents likely to be affected by the proposal.

• Based on the scheme criteria, the outcome of preliminary investigations and the application form submitted, Task Group will, through the Deputy Chief Executive, decide on which projects to support.

• Task Group to submit authorised applications to the Business Planning and Performance Team (bpp@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk) for payment.

Payment arrangements will be as follows:

(a) In the case of works to be delivered from within the Council, funds will be coded and released to the relevant service department for the work to be undertaken or procured.

(b) In the case of grants to community groups, reimbursement of the amount agreed with Task Group will be paid to the relevant contact person via cheque or bank transfer as appropriate.

• Task Group should maintain contact with service officers and/or community group on the delivery of the work

• The Task Group will be asked to provide updates on spending through the year to the Scrutiny Committee, as part of its usual performance reports.

Authorised applications:

• Once an application is approved by the Deputy Chief Executive, it is the responsibility of the Task Group to complete the authorisation of applications and to submit these electronically to the Business Planning and Performance Team (BPP) (bpp@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk).

• Authorised applications must not be sent to BPP until the cost and details of the proposed project have been fully agreed with the relevant Council Officer or Community Group Contact as appropriate.

• In respect of grants to community groups, submission of the authorised application is the Task Group’s guarantee of accountability that the funds will be spent on the project as agreed with them.
• Funding for projects will not be released unless the authorised application contains details of evidence that the project has resulted from community engagement or contact.

• Authorised applications will be saved as part of the BPP electronic records and a summary of schemes will be placed on the Council’s website each year for public inspection.

**Decision Making Rules:**

• All recommendations to the Deputy Chief Executive for funding approval need the agreement of at least 2 other members of the Task Group.

• Any ongoing disputes in respect of perceived difficulty in obtaining decisions within the Task Group will initially be referred to Cabinet for their consideration.

• Where a Member has a personal and prejudicial interest in any proposal, he or she may not take part in any assessment or recommendation regarding that proposal.