

Committee(s): Community and Health Committee	Date: 28 June 2021
Subject: Mental Health Small Grants Scheme	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Kim Anderson, Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager	Public
Report Author: Lucy Gill, Community, Leisure and Wellbeing Officer Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: lucy.gill@brentwood.gov.uk	For Decision

Summary

The Mental Small Grants Scheme was created in partnership with the Health and Wellbeing Board to give Brentwood's communities the opportunity to provide mental health initiatives in the Borough. Grants of up to £4,000 were available to not-for-profit individuals, organisations and groups for wellbeing projects delivered between 1 August 2021 and 31 March 2022. Projects must be delivered in the Borough and involve people with lived experience in design planning and delivery.

The Council received 15 applications requesting a total of £43,851.43. The Mental Health Small Grants Scheme is currently allocated within an existing 2021/2022 budget. The funding was open from 1 April until 10 May 2021. A summary of the applications and the officers' recommendations attached in **Appendix B**.

In addition, Brentwood Borough Council has received an additional £10,000 from Essex County Council's Contain Management Outbreak Fund. It is proposed to use this grant to increase the support available for mental health initiatives.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

Agree to fund those projects highlighted in green as outlined in Appendix B out of the Mental Health Small Grants Scheme and Contain Management Fund allocations.

Main Report

Background

1. The Mental Health Small Grants Scheme was developed in 2017/2018 to give Brentwood's communities the opportunity to promote local initiatives that improve the quality of life of people living locally with mental health illnesses.

This is the fourth round of funding. The Fund has £15,000 allocated for mental health support. The fund this year consists of £10,000 contribution from Brentwood Borough Council and £5,000 contribution from the Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board.

2. The Health and Wellbeing Board has agreed to contribute an additional £400 from its Start Well subgroup to support recipient 6's application, bringing the total allocation to £15,400.
3. Grants of up to £4,000 are available for projects that involve people with lived experience in the codesign and implementation of the initiative. The funding was open to applications from 1 April 2021 until 10 May 2021. The recommendations are before members tonight.
4. The criteria that applicants need to meet for applications for the Mental Health Small Grants Scheme is provided in the information and guidance notes which were available to applicants and are attached in **Appendix A** of this report. This also includes the scoring matrix (**Appendix C**) that officers have used to score each of the applications.
5. The total number of applications to the Mental Health Small Grants Scheme was 15, requesting a total of £43,851.43. A stipulation of this year's criteria was that every project must address emerging mental health issues as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
6. Brentwood Borough Council has also received a £10,000 grant via Essex County Council from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) to continue to enable locally focused support to vulnerable residents, with a stipulation of allocation by 30 June 2021. Funding can be used for public health purposes and should reflect local community needs. Activities the funding could be used for includes targeted interventions for specific sections of the community, harnessing capacity with voluntary sectors, extension of specialist support, community-based support for those disproportionately impacted and providing initial support, as needed to vulnerable people.
7. A summary spreadsheet of officer recommendations and a copy of all of the application forms can be made to Members on request to provide comments on the applications to the Chair of Community and Health Committee prior to the meeting.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

8. The criteria, expected outcomes and application process have been simplified in order to encourage applications and to broaden the accessibility of funding as set out in **Appendix A** of this report. The application criteria was also amended to only allow not-for-profit organisations to apply.

Reasons for Recommendation

9. Each application has been subject to a robust, independent and transparent scoring process to ensure fairness in the allocation of funding (**Appendix C**). Once reviewed, the applications were scored by a panel of officers including a representative from the Health and Wellbeing Board, considering the following key priorities:
 - Evidence that the bid meets the criteria, and the Health and Wellbeing Board expected outcomes
 - Evidence that the applicant has involved those with lived experience in the planning and delivery of the project.
 - Evidence that the bid has an effective monitoring system in place.
 - Evidence that the applicant has sought additional external funding or in-kind value (such as the use of volunteers) for the project
 - Evidence that the project is sustainable once the Mental Health Support Grant contribution has ceased.
10. Once the applications were individually scored, they were ranked by their score. The recommendations by officers of the projects that met the key priorities and the amount of funding that is recommended is attached in **Appendix B** of this report.
11. Those applications marked as green are recommended to receive funding.
12. Notifications will be made to all those applicants that applied. Successful applicants will also have to agree to any terms stipulated within the conditions of the grant being awarded. Successful applicants will also need to complete a self-monitoring report once their project has been completed. Applicants funded by the ECC COMF contribution will need to complete additional monthly monitoring around the numbers of residents supported.
13. Any unsuccessful applicants to the Mental Health Small Grants Scheme will be offered the following support: Telephone call or online meeting with a member of the Community Services team to review their application and offered a funding training session via Brentwood Council for Voluntary

Services which includes tips on submitting a good funding application. Members will also be asked to assist in this process; Organisations will also be signposted to Brentwood Council for Voluntary Services to look for other sources of external funding to support their project if applicable.

Consultation

14. Consultation has been undertaken with previous applicants and as a result the Council has revised and simplified the application process, application form and supporting guidance notes. It was recognised that some organisations or individuals may have had difficulty understanding some terminology in respect of completing the funding application, and the requirements for information and match funding should be proportionate to the amount of money being awarded.
15. Part of the monitoring form that is sent out to all successful candidates, also asks the organisation about the whole process and areas that can improved.

References to Corporate Plan

16. The Mental Health Small Grants Scheme supports a number of priorities and sub priorities within the Corporate Strategy – Brentwood 2025:

Developing Our Communities – Work with local health organisations to develop health and wellbeing initiatives; and support local community initiatives through discretionary funding programmes.

Financial Implications

Name & Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance and Resources) and S151 Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312500 jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

17. The Mental Health Small Grants Scheme pot consists of £10,000 from existing budgets and £5,400 contribution from the Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board's existing budget.
18. The additional £10,000 allocation of external funding via Essex County Council enables a greater number of projects to be supported with no financial implications for the Borough Council.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law and Governance) and Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312705 amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

19. The General Power of Competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a broad power, subject to some limitations to do things an individual may do, provided it is not prohibited by other legislation. This power is wide enough to include the allocation of funding under the Mental Health Small Grants Scheme.
20. Criteria has been formulated against which applications for grant funding will be assessed. This will support decision making on the allocation of funding being made in a fair and transparent way. Which will mitigate the risk of the Council being challenged on its allocation of the monies.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director (Planning and Economy)

Tel/Email: 01277 312500 philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

21. The Mental Health Small Grants Scheme can have a positive impact on the local economy where there are increases in employment and other opportunities for those living with long term mental health illnesses. Recent experience of working through a pandemic has brought people's health and wellbeing into focus. It is positive if employers introduce schemes that recognise the importance of mental health, for the benefit of their workforce and overall wider economic benefits in terms of productivity and outputs.

Health and Wellbeing Implications

Name/Title: Jo Cory, Corporate Health and Wellbeing Officer

Tel/ Email: 01277 312688 jo.cory@brentwood.gov.uk

22. The Mental Health Small Grant Scheme enables the voluntary sector to provide targeted wellbeing support at the heart of communities and will contribute to swifter recovery from the impact of COVID-19, increasing the quality of life for service users and participants of the successful projects. Monitoring and evaluation of these projects is key, and those feedback and outcomes will help to shape future health and well-being projects.

Other Implications

Equality and Diversity Implications

23. The Mental Health small grants scheme will support voluntary and community organisations that best support those with mental ill-health regardless of age,

disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race religion and sexual orientation.

Asset Implications

24. Where relevant, the granting of funding is dependant upon permissions being granted by the owner of the asset.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Mental Health Small Grants Scheme Guidance and Criteria
- Appendix B – Mental Health Small Grants Scheme Scoring Recommendations
- Appendix C – Mental Health Small Grants Scheme Scoring Matrix

Background documents

Report Author Contact Details:

Name: Lucy Gill

Telephone: 01277 312645

E-mail: lucy.gill@brentwood.gov.uk