

	<p style="text-align: center;">Environment Committee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">24 July 2014</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Corporate Grants Programme, 2014/15 – Friends of Childs Hill Park</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Head of Finance</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>Grant assessment – Friends of Childs Hill Park</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>Ken Argent, Grants Manager, Finance, Commissioning Group (ken.argent@barnet.gov.uk) (020 8359 2020) Jenny Warren, Head of Parks, Grounds Maintenance & Street Cleansing, Street Scene (jenny.warren@barnet.gov.uk) (020 8359 7803) Tracy Sawyer, Parks & Open Spaces Officer, Street Scene (tracy.sawyer@barnet.gov.uk) (020 8359 7824)</p>

Summary

This report attaches an assessment of an application by Friends of Childs Hill Park for a grant in support of a project in phase two of a three-year improvement plan for Childs Hill Park.

Recommendation

That Friends of Childs Hill Park be awarded a one-off grant of £7,500, subject to the council's Standard Conditions of Grant Aid and the special conditions shown in the grant assessment enclosed.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Voluntary and community organisations may apply for a one-year start-up or a one-off grant of up to £10,000 from the corporate grants programme.
- 1.2 The power to award grants to voluntary and community groups is contained in the terms of reference of theme committees in the council's constitution - annexe A of Responsibilities for Functions.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 These are as set out in the assessment of the grant application by Friends of Childs Hill Park herewith.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 None.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The applicants will be formally notified of the decision. The grant will be released following compliance with the special conditions attached to it.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Corporate Plan for 2013-16 includes the following strategic objectives:

- Creation of the right environment to promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough
- Supporting families and individuals that need it – promoting independence, learning and well-being
- Improving the satisfaction of residents and businesses with the London Borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study

- 5.1.2 The outcomes around which these objectives are prioritised include:

- To promote better use of parks and green spaces to increase physical activity and well-being and encourage a sense of community
- To support residents to live as healthily and independently as possible
- To support children and young people in making a positive transition to adulthood

- 5.1.3 The council is seeking to develop new and effective partnerships to deliver high quality public services having regard to the significant reduction in government funding. The voluntary and community sector has a significant role to play in this strategy, especially by increasing choice, accessibility and value for money, leading on innovative solutions and improving customers' perception of public services.

5.1.4 A Third Sector Commissioning Framework, approved by the Cabinet Resources Committee in July 2008, sets out guidelines to:

- bring consistency to the council's financial arrangements with the voluntary and community sector; and
- bring procurement from, and grants to, the sector into a single framework consistent with the council's procurement rules

5.1.5 The grants programme offers one-off awards to help voluntary and community organisations (a) develop new services and activities and (b) run specific events or meet certain non-recurring items of expenditure.

5.1.6 All applications are assessed on their individual merits against the council's policy objectives; the benefits to the local community; the effectiveness of the organisation in its service delivery; its overall value for money; its financial needs; and the budget for making awards each year. .

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 The provision for making start-up and one-off grants in 2014/15 is comprised of funds deriving to the authority from the Edward Harvist Charity; a small annual allocation from the former Borough Lottery Scheme; and a one-off contingency fund.

5.2.2 The current position on the funding available in 2014/15, which reflects the sum that is currently held by the council from the Edward Harvist Charity, to be supplemented during the course of the year as and when the council receives further payments, is as follows:

Budget item	Funding available, 2014/15	Approvals to date	Balance remaining	Recommended herewith
Edward Harvist Charity	£44,390	£10,200	£34,190	0
Former Borough Lottery Fund	£15,000	£1,500	£13,500	£7,500
Contingency	£45,000	0	£45,000	0
TOTAL	£104,390	£11,700	£92,690	£7,500

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 The council has power to make grants awards under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

5.4 Risk Management

- 5.4.1 All grants are made subject to the council's Standard Conditions of Grant Aid, with which applicants are required to signify their compliance by signing a written undertaking. Amongst other things, the conditions cover how awards are spent, allowing council officers a right of access to proof thereof, and requiring notification of any change in an organisation's circumstances which significantly affect its finances, operations or grant entitlement. The council reserves the right to withhold payment of any approved grant, or to demand full or partial repayment, if it appears that an organisation has failed to comply with any of the conditions attached to the award.
- 5.4.2 The shift towards greater community involvement in the delivery of services has involved some relaxation in the attitude traditionally taken to compliance with eligibility criteria before an award is recommended. Whilst all applicants are expected to satisfy basic governance requirements, such as having an independent management committee, it is accepted that community-led and self-help groups often require the support of a parent organisation or other agency. In cases such as these, account is taken of other relevant factors, such as knowledge of a supporting agency and mechanisms to manage an applicant's financial affairs. All applicants are expected to work towards full independence within a reasonable period.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.5.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the council and all other organisations exercising public functions must have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by or under the Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups;
 - foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making; the design of policies; and the delivery of services.

- 5.5.2 All voluntary and community organisations grant-aided by the council are required to demonstrate that they have an equal opportunities policy covering users, staff and volunteers, which promotes equal treatment for all irrespective of their age, disability, gender, sexuality, ethnic background, faith, health, language or social and economic background. Scrutiny of compliance with these considerations, and how they contribute to promoting good relations between people and communities, forms part of the standard procedure for assessing all applications

5.5.2 Voluntary and community organisations are required to demonstrate how their activities support the council in meeting its equalities obligations in accordance with the greater emphasis on commissioning and awarding of contracts.

5.5.3 The Friends of Childs Hill Park's marsh garden project will be implemented in partnership with the Harington Scheme, a charity that trains and supports young people with learning difficulties or disabilities to find employment in the horticultural and land-based sectors. The project is intended to create a safe and natural educational play space for the community at large.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

5.6.1 The application in question has been assessed in conjunction with the Green Spaces Team in Street Scene.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Cabinet Resources Committee, 22 July 2008 (decision item 11): approval of a Third Sector Commissioning Framework.

6.2 Council, 4 March 2014: approval of corporate grants budget for 2014/15.