

KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT FOR DECISION

Item No:- FC24/052

Committee:-	Finance and Governance Committee
Date:-	22 nd January 2025
Author:-	Martin Hammond, Clerk
Report Title:-	Environmental Grant Applications
Wards Affected:-	All

1. Purpose of Report

To submit applications from the 2024 round of the environmental grants programme, including the Love Wildlife grant programme.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to determine the applications received in accordance with the grants policy

3. Information

3.1. The Council has agreed an environmental grants allocation of £8,000 for this financial year and a policy for distribution of the money through an application process. The £8000 is made up of £5000 for general environmental improvement schemes and £3000 from the Love Wildlife programme. They were marketed together as a single fund, with two strands:-

- Very local projects attracting up to £1000 in grant
- Borough wide projects attracting up to £3000 in grant

3.2. The application stage ended on 30th November - 8 applications were received, with a combined ask of up to £15931. Two further applications were rejected – one because it was out of area, and the second because it came from a private business and did not fit the criteria for this round.

3.3. The applications are set out in the table below. Page numbers refer to Appendix Two.

	Applicant	Organisational purpose	£ sought	Project funding requested for	Ward	Match funding
1	William St Community Garden Page 1	Develop publicly accessible organic garden for our community with focus on wellbeing and learning. Raise awareness of the value of growing food and flowers without chemicals. Raising awareness of wider ecological issues. We run workshops and educational activities	£1000	To support conservation work and establish our pond and attract more diversity of wildlife. We have permission to install Swift boxes in bell tower of the church and hoping to work with Kettering Nature Group on this. We have cleared some shrubs in the garden and will focus on planting more native species. Aim to establish edible wildflower meadow and to do this, we need to remove top soil in the meadow area of the church.	All Saints	Not yet A separate ward fund payment to them of £396 has been made.
2	All Saints Community Group Page 3	Community cohesion and pride. Bringing the community together through environmental improvement work and events	£1500	Community clean up - improve local landscape, encourage families to take pride in their community, improve community interactions and creating spaces that feel welcoming and safe. It will also hopefully engage young people.	All Saints	£80 of dog waste signs from local councillor

3	Grange Resource Centre Page 5	Community first wellbeing warm space, food and advice hub . We have started an allotment to grow food for the community	£1800	To make the allotment more efficient and productive, growing vegetables all year. making a safe environment, improving mental health, involving schools and the half way house Judith Rd	Avondale Grange and Pipers Hill	Last year - funding for shed polytunnel plants and compost
4	Brambleside Primary School Page 7	Primary school	£630.44	A gardening and sustainability project to benefit students, staff and local wildlife, working with Natural Ise to enhance our growing space	Brambleside	Ward initiative funding has been requested.
5	Ronald Tree Nursery Page 9	Nursery school	£2500	Provide a habitat in our playground area for hedgehogs butterflies and other small insects	Avondale Grange	None
6	Civic Society Page 11	To promote high standards of planning and architecture, educate, preserve. Protect and develop features of historic and public interest To promote civic pride	£3000	Artwork along the interior of the railway station bridge	Wm Knibb	£3000 provided by Civic Society from own resources. A further grant of £1000 applied for.
7	Kettering Nature Group Page 14	Fostering environmental stewardship, preserving diverse ecosystems, and promoting mental well-being within our community. Through showcasing local spaces and wildlife, we engage	£3000	'Nature Nexus' program, a town-wide initiative designed to unite the community in adopting wildlife-friendly practices and enriching Kettering's green spaces. Through this program, we	Town wide	Some support in kind and volunteering resources.

		a growing community, while leading and supporting citizen science initiatives that create lasting impact locally, nationally, and internationally.		aim to foster biodiversity by encouraging wildlife gardening and facilitating the installation of nest boxes, bat boxes, hedgehog highways, and other eco-friendly projects across both private gardens and public spaces		
8	Naturalise Page 17	The group's main role is to increase the biodiversity along the River Ise in Kettering.	£1000 or £2500 (two variants of the same project see appendix)	The creation of ponds in an area close to the Ise River in Ise Lodge. This area floods and low areas remain waterlogged for long periods and then dry up. Digging these areas deeper will ensure that ponds remain for longer, and promote bio diversity Resultant banks will be sown with wildflowers, also enhancing biodiversity	Ise	£1600 secured from three other sources including £300 from ward initiatives fund.

4. Assessment

4.1. The policy applies some further tests to the applications:-

- Does the project target resources to meet identified needs?
- Does it maximise leverage and match funding?
- Does it maximise sustainability – social economic and environmental?
- Does the application offer greater accountability and open-ness?
- Is the funding to be provided sustainable?

This analysis is set out in Appendix 3. The table has been colour coded to reflect a good match (green), moderate match (amber) or a poor match (red) with these tests.

- 4.2. A copy of the grants policy is attached as Appendix 1 and the completed applications forms are attached as Appendix 2
- 4.3. Clearly with this spread of applications, all of which have merit, it will be necessary to find some alternative strategies when considering applications, including
 - Offering less than that requested from applicants, which would require them to scale down their ask; for some that might render the project unviable
 - Supplementing the award from this fund with unspent ward initiative money – see item 61 on this agenda for a summary of WIF money unspent at the end of December by ward. It is for this committee to allocate any unspent money left after 1st January.
 - Finding other funding streams for projects deemed worth funding but not from this pot; in reality there is only unused funding in the community resilience fund that could be called upon and only the All Saints Group project would – partly - satisfy the criteria for that pot. This fund has £2200 left in it.

5. Consultation and Engagement

- 5.1. The policy was the subject of consultation before it was adopted.
- 5.2. The availability of grants was advertised through the website and social media accounts, and by some members, and directly to a further 100 or so groups through the offices of the Voluntary Sector Network, which has a standing offer to support those completing an application form.

6. Finance, Legal and Resource Implications

- 6.1. There is £8,000 in the budget. The applications total £15930, or £14430 if application no 7's smaller grant application is counted.
- 6.2. Applicants seeking money for core costs are not guaranteed ongoing funding under the policy.

7. Policy and Climate Change Implications

The funded is partly directed at improving biodiversity, and wholly directed at improving open spaces, public spaces and the wider environment.

Background Papers

Applications
Publicity material
Policy
Accounts for ward initiatives fund

